MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS

HIS LIFE AND TIMES

C. CLAYTON DOVE

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MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS:

HIS LIFE AND TIMES

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BY

C. CLAYTON DOVE,

AUTHOR OF "PAUL OF TARSUS: HIS LIFE AND TEACHING"

LONDON:

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5 & 6 JOHNSON'S COURT, FLEET STREET, E.C.4

30 SEP 1953

Der edle Mensch
Sei hülfreich und gut !
Unermüdet schaff'er
Das Nützliche, Rechte,
Sei uns ein Vorbild
Jener geahneten Wesen.

—*Göthe.*

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PREFACE

THE curious reader will find in the Appendix some account of the various authorities cited in this work. To avoid excess of references I have not given any concerning matters easily ascertainable from encyclopedias, et cetera—the nature of Roman institutions, for example. Upon the other hand, I have referred copiously to the sources whence the biographical details are derived, because, although the general reader is not in a position to verify these statements himself, it is a satisfaction for him to know that critics are afforded every opportunity of investigation. It has been my object to report the alleged facts exactly without encumbering them by the imaginative interpretations which some historians think fit to supply. These writers sacrifice accuracy to picturesqueness, and their inferences and suppositions are taken by their successors for parts of the original tradition. Thus reality becomes inextricably mixed with fiction. Every one who records things of the distant past is liable to transmit untruths; but his duty is to avoid increas-

ing the stock, and to diminish it if possible. In most cases he can only repeat what has been said, leaving its acceptance or refusal to the discretion of his readers; but occasionally he is able to test assertions with a view to proving their verity or their falsity. In all languages the phrase "it is said," or its equivalents, is the one most frequently used by the cautious historian, while correct decisions are often based upon accumulated allegations containing a number of fictitious elements. To write about Marcus does not involve any pretentiousness or assumptiveness. No one expects the biographers of Caesar to repeat the victories of that general, and the critic who discusses Shakespeare or Leonardo da Vinci is not usually invited to write another *Hamlet* or to paint another *Gioconda*. The value of the great consists in their being exceptional and inimitable. In this respect Marcus is the peer of those whom I have just mentioned, and his altitude is as inapproachable as theirs. "God is great," say the Arabs; and it is good to see what he can do at his best, while to ask that he should repeat himself would be a reflection upon his art.

For the rest, I have tried to carry out my task in the way that Marcus would seem to have

approved—namely, by gathering the facts with care, and by repeating them as truthfully and as simply as I could. This is the full extent to which I have ever ventured upon an *imitatio Marci*; my best wishes are with those who may propose to go further.

C. C. D.

March 1, 1930.

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Chapter I

BOYHOOD AND ADOPTION

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus was of a family credited with the inheritance of royal blood from Numa Pompilius, second King of Rome, and from Malennius, a monarch who ruled over the Salentines in Calabria, and founded the City of Lopias. The later ancestry is as follows. A certain Annius Verus of Succubitanum in Spain, who was appointed praetor and afterwards made senator, had a son to whom he gave his own name. This second Annius Verus not only received patrician rank [in A.D. 73[1]] from Vespasian and Titus, then censors, but also became prefect of Rome, and twice [or thrice[2]] consul. He married Rupilia Faustina, daughter of Rupilius Bonus of consular family, by whom he had at least three children—namely, Annia Galeria Faustina, wife of the Emperor Antoninus Pius, Annius Libo, a consul, and Annius Verus, a praetor. The last-named married Domitia [Lucilla] Calvilla,[3] daughter of Calvisius

[1] Liebenham, p. 106. [2] *Ib.* p. 21.

[3] On the estate possessed by the mother of Marcus there were several manufactories of bricks, tiles, and earthenware. Many articles excavated in the district bear the name of Domitia Lucilla [wife] of [Publius Annius] Verus. None of the ancient authorities except Capitolinus gives her the name "Calvilla," and he does this only on one occasion. M. Des Vergers, who makes these remarks, adds that, since her father's name was Calvisius, "Calvissilla" and not "Calvilla" would have been the derivative form. Besides this he recalls that both "Lucilla" and "Calvilla" are diminutives, and that there is no other example of a Roman lady with two such names. Finally, he considers that, if she had had a third name, the three would have been Domitia Calva Lucilla—but why not Calvisia instead of Calva? Pp. 3, 4.

Tullus, twice consul, whose father was Catilius Severus, prefect of Rome, and also twice consul. The fruit of this marriage was Marcus and his sister Annia Cornificia.

Marcus was born at Rome on April 26, A.D. 121, in the gardens of Mons Coelius, or the Coelian Hill, once famous for its oaks, and now called the Lateran Mount. He was brought up partly there and partly in the house of his grandfather Verus near the palace of the Lateran. At first he did not bear the name by which he is known to history, but was called after one of his grandfathers, apparently his father's father, and also after his mother's grandfather. While still young he lost his father, who was exercising the praetorship ; and upon this event he was adopted by his father's father. It was not until his fifteenth year that he began to use his father's name, Annius Verus.[1] In his *Meditations* he says :—

> From my grandfather Verus [I learned] good morals and the government of my temper. From the reputation and remembrance of my father, modesty and a manly character. From my mother, piety and beneficence, and abstinence, not only from evil deeds, but even from evil thoughts ; and further simplicity in my way of living, far removed from the habits of the rich. From my grandfather, not to have frequented public schools, and to have had good teachers at home, and to know that on such things a man should spend liberally (i, 1–4).

Marcus early displayed the qualities for which he is famous. Even in infancy, according to Eutropius, his countenance never changed either from joy or from sorrow. On the testimony of Dio, he was good by nature and gave pleasure to all his kindred before receiving any education.[2] This precocious virtue

[1] Genealogy et cetera. Cap. M. ANT. 1 (*natus.....sexto Kalendas mai.....avo suo iterum et Augure consulibus*). [2] Dio, lxxi, 35.

attracted a great lover of curiosities, the Emperor Hadrian, who took quite a fancy to the boy, and in his pleasant way called him Verissimus. He proceeded to honour him publicly at the age of six years, and to admit him in his eighth year into the college or confraternity of the Salian priests.[1] These were devoted to Mars, the god of war, and during his month they went through the city in procession, performing a gay ritual of songs and dances. Their feasts were of great magnificence, and the *dapes Saliares* became a term employed by gourmands to describe the summit of culinary delights. One day, as the youthful Marcus and his fellow pontiffs were throwing wreaths upon the dais before the statue and the altar of Mars, it came to pass that, while the wreaths of the others fell in all directions, his wreath alighted upon the head of the god, just as if it had been handed there. This lucky cast was understood to foreshadow the attainment of imperial rank. In his time Marcus held, besides the priesthood, the three great offices of the college—presaltor, precantor, and master. He performed many consecrations and deconsecrations ; and required no prompter, as he knew all the formulas by heart.[2] Lest it should be thought that at this his most impressionable age Marcus was occupied with nothing but the mummery and good cheer of pontifical life, it is of importance to mention that, after entering upon his twelfth year, he assumed the dress, and, what is more, the endurance, of the philosopher. He reclined on the ground to study, wrapped only in his cloak ; and, even at the instance of his mother, he would hardly recline upon a couch provided with skins.[3] His education was brilliant. Mention is made

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 4. M. Des Vergers says that the honour given to Marcus at the age of six years was inscription into the equestrian order ; p. 5. [2] Cap. M. Ant. 4. [3] *Ib.* 2.

of more than twenty persons under whom he studied;[1] and ten of these he himself names in his *Meditations*, recording the particular obligation in every case. It is very suggestive that the indebtedness recorded is almost always of a moral nature, and concerns the value of their precepts and example in the right development of his character. Even with respect to Alexander of Phrygia, who taught him the elements of Greek, he writes as follows:—

> From Alexander the grammarian [I learned] to refrain from fault-finding, and not in a reproachful way to chide those who uttered any barbarous or solecistic or strange-sounding expression; but dexterously to introduce the very expression which ought to have been used, and in the way of answer or giving confirmation, or joining in an inquiry about the thing itself, not about the word, or by some other suggestion (i, 10).

These preceptors seem to have been excellent men. One of them, Diognetus, persuaded Marcus "not to give credit to what was said by miracle workers and jugglers about incantations and the driving away of demons, and such things." Another, Rusticus, the Stoic, dissuaded him from parading asceticism, and

[1] *Elementary Greek*, Alexander the Phrygian*; *elementary Latin*, Trosius Aper, Pollio, and Eutychius Proculus of Sicca; *Grecian oratory*, Annius Macer, Cannius Celer, Herodes Atticus, and Hermogenes; *Latin oratory*, Cornelius Fronto*; *Stoic philosophy*, Apollonius of Chalcis*, Claudius Maximus*, Cinna Catulus*, and Junius Rusticus*; *Platonic philosophy*, Alexander*; *Peripatetic philosophy*, Claudius Severus*; *painting*, Diognetus*; *jurisprudence*, Lucius Volusianus Maccianus; *other branches*, Sextus of Chaeronea*, and Commodus. [MED. i, 6–15; M. ANT. 2, 3, 4; Dio, lxxi, 1–35.] Those with the asterisks are named by Marcus. Eusebius (CHRON. p. 384) specifies Arrianus of Carthage and Basilides of Scythopolis as teachers of Marcus. Capitolinus says Marcus had as elementary instructors Euphorion the grammarian, Geminus the comedian, and Andron the geometrician and musician (M. ANT. 2).

from showing off benevolence. Another, Apollonius of Chalcis, taught him to acquire fixity of purpose, and to trust nothing even for a moment, except reason. Another, Sextus of Chaeronea, bade him tolerate the ignorant and the thoughtless. Another, Alexander the Platonic, showed him the meanness of forging excuses to avoid serving those who should have our assistance. Another, Claudius Severus, gave him "the idea of a polity in which there is the same law for all, a polity administered with regard to equal rights and equal freedom of speech, and the idea of a kingly government which respects most of all the freedom of the governed." These instructions were not all received in boyhood or in early youth, for the studies of Marcus lasted many years. During the long period when he bore the title of Caesar and was heir apparent to the empire he pursued them with avidity; and even after he had attained the prouder designation of Augustus, and was seated upon the throne, he still continued to visit his masters and to attend their discourses.

The most important occasion in the life of a Roman stripling was when he exchanged the garment called the *toga praetexta* for that called the *toga virilis*. This generally took place at the age of seventeen years. The youthful friends of the candidate bore him to the Forum, and clothed him there in his new garb with various ceremonies. From that day he became capable of military service, and was known in this respect as a *tiro*. For some reason or other Marcus received the *toga virilis*, or manly gown, in his fifteenth year, and at the same time he assumed the name of Annius Verus. Forthwith the Emperor Hadrian caused him to be betrothed to Fabia, daughter of Lucius Ceionius Commodus, a dissipated aristocrat whom he had recently adopted as his son and heir, giving him the

name Aelius and the title Caesar. The greatest festival of the year was that of the Latin Fêtes. Over these Marcus was appointed to preside. According to the legend, they had been instituted by Tarquin the Proud, last king of Rome, to commemorate the alliance of the Romans with the Latins ; but in truth they had existed long before his reign, and he merely adapted them to the purpose named. The celebration took place on the Alban Mount, and it had special reference to the worship of Jupiter Latiaris. As political interests were affected by the event, the authorities had the right of determining the date to suit their convenience. Originally one day, but afterwards four or six days, was the time occupied by the ceremonies. In spite of his youth, Marcus discharged the functions of president with a tact that gained him much applause. Meanwhile, having received his father's legacy, he gave the whole of it to his sister, remarking, when his mother wished him to divide it, that he was content with his grandfather's property, and that she also might give her patrimony to his sister, lest she should be below her husband.[1] He displayed a similar generosity in other cases, telling his agents to act with moderation, and renouncing legacies in favour of nearer heirs.[2] In spite of his natural gravity and of his studious disposition, Marcus, as youth advanced, displayed a certain taste for sports and pastimes. He would go without much persuasion to the chase, the theatre, and the public games. He liked boxing, wrestling, running, and hawking, and he

[1] Toga.....patrimony. Cap. M. Ant. 4. Capitolinus implies that Marcus presided over the Latin Fêtes, but M. Des Vergers takes him to mean that Marcus presided over Rome as [deputy] prefect, or chief magistrate, while the consuls were away presiding at the Fêtes (p. 13). Upon his mother's death, Marcus gave part of her property to Mummius Quadratus, son of his sister, then deceased. Cap. M. Ant. 7. [2] Cap. M. Ant. 7.

was clever with the ball. These distractions tended to restore his health, which had been impaired by excessive study, "the only fault of his boyhood," as Capitolinus finely observes. Subsequently the philosophical pursuits of Marcus withdrew him from such exercises; but his kindliness and his modesty tempered the impression made by his seriousness, and rendered him agreeable to his friends, and even to his acquaintances.[1] He had close comrades of his own age, and promoted several of them in after life. One of these deserves mention. This was his fellow scholar Aufidius Victorinus, of senatorial rank, who afterwards distinguished himself as a general, and became Prefect of Rome. He was greatly attached to Marcus, but he chaffed him about his poetry, and would not admit his oratorical powers. Marcus trusted him fully and loaded him with honours. In the next reign the favourite of the day thought of putting Victorinus to death. He, however, meeting his enemy in the street, told him that he had heard of this design, and asked him why he did not execute it immediately? The matter ended there.[2] Readers acquainted with the loose manners current among the upper classes of Rome when Marcus was young, and especially with the deplorable habits indulged by his patron, the Emperor Hadrian, will not feel displeased to hear him say:—

> I am thankful to the gods that I was not longer brought up with my grandfather's concubine, and that I preserved the flower of my youth, and that I did not make proof of my virility before the proper season, but even deferred the time.

Later on in the passage, but seemingly with reference

[1] Sports et cetera. *Ib.* 4.

[2] *Ib.* 3; Fronto, *Ad M. Caes.* i, 8; *Ad Ant. Imp.* i, 2; Dio, lxxii, 11. Victorinus was Consul in 155 and 183. Lieb. pp. 23, 25.

to the same period, he mentions as a further debt to the gods

> that I never touched Benedicta or Theodotus, and that, after having fallen into amatory passions, I was cured.

The Greek word here rendered *touch* is applied to sexual intercourse, and the apostle Paul thus uses it (I Cor. vii, 1).

The prospects of Marcus at this time were those of a private gentleman of independent means and literary tastes. Before long, however, fortune smiled upon him with a grace that many would have valued more than he did. Aelius Caesar, heir of Hadrian, having finished his gay and indiscreet career on January 1, 138,[1] the Emperor began to look round for another successor, and it is said that had Marcus been old enough he would have got the position.[2] As it was, Hadrian chose Titus Aurelius Fulvus Boionius Arrius Antoninus, whom he adopted on condition that he in turn should adopt Marcus together with Lucius, son of the deceased Aelius Caesar, and should give Lucius his daughter Faustina to wife.[3] The adoption of Titus, which of course involved that of Marcus and Lucius, took place on February 15, 138,[4] Titus being then in his fifty-first, Marcus in his seventeenth, and Lucius in his eighth, year.[5] On that memorable day, or on the preceding

[1] Spart. HAD. 23. [2] Cap. M. ANT. 16.

[3] Spart. HAD. 24, and AELIUS VER. 4, 5; Cap. ANT. P. 4, M. ANT. 5, and VER. 2. [4] Cap. ANT. P. 4.

[5] Capitolinus says that Titus Antoninus was born on September 19, the consuls being Domitian (twelfth time) and Cornelius Dolabella [A.D. 86, Liebenham, p. 17], and that he died in his seventieth year. But Mr. M. Valton points out in a note that the period from the twelfth consulate of Domitian to the accession of Marcus [161] was seventy-four years. If so, Titus Antoninus was born in A.D. 87. Victor [CAES.] makes him die in his seventy-sixth, and Eutropius in his sixty-third year. Capitolinus says that Lucius was born on December 15 (*decimo octavo kalendas*

night, Marcus dreamed that his shoulders were of ivory, and that, having tested their capacity for sustaining a load, he found them to be stronger than their wont. He was more terrified than rejoiced at the honour conferred, and he left his mother's gardens with reluctance when ordered to reside at the palace. To friends who did not understand his sadness under such auspicious circumstances he exposed the evils of imperial rank. In accordance with his new situation, he dropped Annius, his father's name, and called himself M. Aelius Aurelius ; Aelius pertaining to the family of Hadrian, and Aurelius to that of Antoninus. Although far below the required age of twenty-five, he was designated at the instance of Hadrian to the Quaestorship, and began to discharge the office that very year.[1] The Quaestors, or *Quaestores Classici*, were originally no more than two ; but the number was increased at various times, and probably grew with the extension of the empire. They were the receivers and the paymasters of the public funds. They had also to keep a register of demands upon the Treasury, and of fines paid into it. Members of the order accompanied the army in war to pay the soldiers and to sell the booty. Others were attached to proconsuls and praetors when administering provinces. One had to manage the corn supply of Rome ; three had to raise the unfarmed revenues in Italy. The exact duties of Marcus are not stated, but any of the functions above described would seem to have demanded far more than could be awaited from a youth in his

januarias), and that upon his adoption [in February, 138] he was taken into the Aurelian family after having passed his seventh year (*post septimum annum*), VER. 1, 2. His birth therefore occurred December 15, 130. Liebenham gives September 19, A.D. 86, for Titus Antoninus, and December 15, A.D. 130, for Lucius Verus, as dates of birth.

[1] Dream et cetera. Cap. M. ANT. 5.

eighteenth year. The case illustrates what is to be expected from monarchs with ample prerogatives. The premature honours bestowed upon Marcus did not spoil his admirable character. He treated his kinsfolk with the same respect, displayed the same thrift and diligence, and sought in every way to fit the mould of his adopter.[1] It is significant that, while Marcus records his obligation to a score of people, he does not include Hadrian in the number, although he had known him so well and had received from him such important favours. Yet Hadrian was certainly a man of learning, intelligence, and refined tastes. He travelled everywhere. His curiosity was insatiable. He patronized arts and letters. He dabbled in astrology, and he was not indifferent to religion. His wit was delicate. He could write graceful poetry. There was a touch of melancholy and of sentiment in his disposition. He was a sagacious statesman, and, though he preferred peace to war, he was not deficient in the qualities of a soldier. Unhappily, he indulged in some excesses and perversions, but to a less extent than many of his equals in rank. When old he suffered much pain. This spoiled his disposition, and he became suspicious, violent, and cruel. After adopting Antoninus, he twice attempted suicide, being utterly tired of life. Finally he retreated to his country house at Baiae, on the coast of Campania. While there, feeling his end approach, he sent for Antoninus, and passed away in his presence on July 10, 138,[2] after having improvised these lines :—

Animula vagula, blandula,	Little soul fleeting and fair,
Hospes comesque corporis,	Mate of the body and its guest,
Quae nunc abibis in loca,	Whither dost thou now repair,
Pallidula, rigida, nudula ;	Pallid and rigid and bare,
Nec, ut soles, dabis joca.[3]	To pass no more thy wonted jest.

[1] *Ib.* 5. [2] *Die sexto iduum juliarum*, Spart. HAD. 25. [3] *Ib.* 25.

Chapter II

CONSUL, CAESAR, AND STUDENT

Immediately upon the death of Hadrian, Titus Antoninus, through the mediation of his wife, solicited Marcus to sever his engagement with Fabia, and to marry their daughter Faustina, who was betrothed to Lucius; assigning as the reason that Lucius was too young to marry. Marcus asked for time to consider the proposal.[1] The offer and the hesitation to accept it have each of them a humorous side. The father of Lucius was a profligate and a spendthrift;[2] the mother of Faustina was flighty and unfaithful;[3] while, in after life, both the young man and the young woman assiduously followed the path their parents trod. Naturally, the cause of the hesitation is a different matter. M. Des Vergers attributes it to a scruple of conscience, believing that Marcus held himself bound by the actual engagement. This, however, had lasted two years, and if Fabia were somewhat older than her brother she may by the end of that time have become a delicious bud, full of rich promise. Marcus was then but in his eighteenth year, and this is a time of life when even a sage may discover that the heart has reasons which

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 6; Ver. 2.

[2] See his life by Spartian. He is said to have obtained his adoption through complacencies rarely acknowledged on memorial tablets. He was of gentle birth, and possessed some attractive qualities, including elegant manners and literary tastes. But he squandered his money in all directions, and gave way to a debauchery that ended in his death. His son displayed the same follies, and shared the same fate. [3] Cap. Ant. P. 3.

the reason ignores. He himself alludes to his having recovered from fits of love, and possibly Fabia occasioned one of these attacks. Between thirty and forty years later, when death had ended the long marriage of Marcus and Faustina, Fabia, whom she is said to have detested, sought persistently to marry him; but, for the sake of his children, he preferred to console himself with one who asked less, and perhaps offered more.[1] In the autumn of 139 Titus Antoninus, who was then occupying the consulate a second time, designated Marcus Aurelius to join him therein. Originally the consulate was annual, and occupied by two men, neither of whom could act without the other's consent, the object being to prevent tyranny. Under the *Lex Annalis* (B.C. 180) a man became eligible at 43 years of age. The existing consuls, or, in rare cases, some exceptional official, conducted the election, which was made by a popular assembly. The successful candidates were named *consules designati*, and they assumed their functions the next year, ruling a month alternately. In B.C. 153 the first of January became the date of assumption. The consuls had many marks of dignity and enjoyed great power. At first they were supreme over the State and over the army. Subsequently, however, their civil authority was curtailed by the appointment of *tribuni plebis* to defend the interests of the common people. Under the empire further changes took place. Augustus and his successors received consular power for life, but they played the comedy of presenting themselves for election, whenever they thought fit to pose as consuls. Thenceforth the

[1] Cap. M. ANT. 29; VER. 10.

[2] *Adhuc quaestorem et consulem secum Pius Marcum designavit.* Cap. M. ANT. 6. This was in A.D. 139, during the second [M. ANT. 6] consulate of Pius. Liebenham, p. 22.

consulate became enfeebled, and often passed through different hands in the course of a single year, the first holders of the office in any year having the pre-eminence and being cited for chronological purposes, as if they were the sole consuls of that year. Moreover, from the time of the second Emperor the elections were made by the Senate instead of by assemblies of the people. As the Senate itself was in the hands of the emperors, the consulate, once a safeguard of liberty, became at best effete, and at worst an instrument of tyranny. While still Consul-designate, Marcus received further honours from his adoptive father. He was set over one of the six squadrons of Roman knights, and the Emperor attended the games presented by him and his colleagues. The above divisions do not appear to have made up the whole equestrian order, but to have been selections therefrom, composed exclusively of noble youths whose sires were patricians or senators. The leadership of such a group is always mentioned as one of the earliest functions attainable by distinguished Romans. This brilliant youth, arranged into two parties, gave spectacles representing the Trojan War. Reception into the college or society of pontiffs was another dignity conferred upon Marcus at this time. Capitolinus says that Pius gave it to Marcus by order of the Senate. But here is a piece of mere hypocrisy. For Augustus, who, by a far-sighted policy, had taken measures for himself and his successors to get all possible kinds of power into their own hands without attracting public attention, had not neglected the potent instrument of religious authority. An inscription exhibits him as high priest and member of the four great priesthoods. Tiberius took the same course. Nero, adopted son of Claudius and named by him "Caesar," was at the age of fourteen years the first with that title

whom the Senate admitted into all the priestly societies; and thenceforth other Caesars enjoyed the privilege. Domitian, for instance, in the lifetime of his father, Vespasian, was described as *Sacerdos Collegiorum Omnium*. It was official duplicity and nothing more that led the emperors to confer this honour through the Senate, for they had rendered that body subservient to their wishes. A statue of Marcus found at Tyndaris and deposited at Palermo represents him as a youth in priestly robes presiding over a sacrifice. The accompanying inscription describes him as Consul, and in all probability the occasion celebrated is that when he entered upon the consulate for the first time. Greater, however, by far than any of these honours was the title "Caesar" which Marcus now received, since this, in accordance with the precedent of Hadrian, was attached to presumptive heirs of the empire, the title "Augustus" being reserved for the emperors. As a natural consequence of such distinctions Marcus received orders from Titus to take up his residence in the Tiberian palace; and he was, against his will, adorned with the signs of princely power.[1] It was probably in A.D. 139 that Marcus had his first opportunity of becoming officially acquainted with Christianity, which he must certainly have heard of before in his private capacity. By a Rescript of 111, or thereabouts, the Emperor Trajan had decreed that Christians must neither be searched out for trial, nor be indicted on anonymous accusations; but that if any, after being lawfully accused, persisted in their faith they should be duly punished.[2] Hadrian, about 125, while accepting this decision, had mitigated its force by imposing penalties upon unsuccessful accusers.[3] This

[1] Distinctions et cetera. Cap. M. ANT. 6, 7; Des Vergers, pp. 20, 15, 16, 19. [2] Plin. x, 98. [3] Eusebius, H. E. iv, 3.

would naturally induce the Christians to approach his successor; and, as a matter of fact, an *Apology* on behalf of their faith was addressed to Titus, Marcus, and Lucius by Justinus, a native of Flavia Neapolis, the ancient Sichem in Samaria, who had been a Pagan, and who called himself a philosopher. The address is as follows:—

> To the Emperor Titus Aelius Adrianus Antoninus Pius Augustus Caesar, and to his son Verissimus the philosopher, and to Lucius the philosopher, the natural son of Caesar, but the adopted of Pius, the lover of learning, and to all the people of Rome.[1]

The writer complains of Christians being punished for the name, saying:—

> When a Christian is indicted you snatch at the shadow of his name for a substantial crime.....if any one of the accused retract the name of Christian, you take him presently at his word, and acquit him.....but he who has the courage to stick to the profession of his name is certain to suffer for so doing.[2] We know it is death by your law.....so much as to profess the name of Christ.[3]

This proves conclusively that Trajan's Rescript was not only still valid, but also rigorously enforced. The *Apology* is bigoted, aggressive, and intolerant. The arguments are sophistical, and the tone is insolent. The writer pretends that the sages of Greece had plagiarized Moses; and he explains the resemblance of his religion to other religions by saying that devils had invented a travesty of the truth. Towards his illustrious readers he displays an utter lack of tact, diplomacy, and even common sense. Addressing them, he says:—

> You do not hold the scales of justice even; for, instigated by headstrong passions.....you take great

[1] Reeves's Translation, 1717. [2] 3. [3] 60.

> care that we suffer, though you care not for what.[1] You indeed, and all such wicked enemies, without repentance, shall one day pay for this persecution in fire everlasting.[2] If you persist in this course of iniquity you shall not escape the vengeance of God in another world.[3]

It should be mentioned that, although many critics refer the *Apology* to the time here suggested, some others are of opinion that it appeared several years later. They point to the fact that Justinus speaks of a century and a half as having passed since the birth of Christ (B.C. 4),[4] but this argument will be of little credit with any who have observed his frequent laxity of expression. Again, from a reference to Marcion the Heresiarch, which occurs in the *Apology*,[5] it is inferred that the work was written after he came to Rome in the early forties of that century. But Justinus does not say that Marcion had come to Rome ; and he himself was familiar with Asia Minor whence Marcion had sprung. The evidence of the dedication is strong. Justinus applies to Marcus the name Verissimus, which does not seem to have been applied to him except at the beginning of his public life ; and, although he is so scrupulous in repeating titles, yet he does not give Marcus that of Caesar, while the only Caesar he appears to have known of was the father of Lucius, Aelius Caesar, the first of Hadrian's intended successors. Hence, as I infer, Justinus, when writing the *Apology*, knew that Titus, the recently made Emperor whom he was addressing, possessed two adoptive sons, but did not know that Titus had promoted either of them to the rank of Caesar, unless, of course, he was aware of the promotion yet uncertain which of the two had received it —a possibility that does not affect the present argument.

[1] 5. [2] 60. [3] 90. [4] 61. [5] 35.

As regards the effect of the *Apology*, although such an indiscreet effusion was certainly not of a character to propitiate any ruler, and although it might have seemed likely to confirm Titus Antoninus in suppressing Christianity by drawing his attention to the dangerous intolerance of the system, yet, nevertheless, it made him, according to Orosius, benign towards the Christians.[1] Eusebius, after quoting from it, adds that appeal was likewise made to Titus Antoninus by the brethren in the Province of Asia; and he quotes a Rescript from him in answer thereunto.[2] This document, in a slightly different form, exists at the end of Justinus's work. It has only one defect: its total inverisimilitude. The early Christians, as is well known, had a ready, but not always felicitous, way of supplying documentary evidence. Still, there is no smoke without fire, and Melito, Bishop of Sardis, in an *Apology* addressed to Marcus about 170, says: "Thy father, when thou wast with him in the administration, wrote to various cities to do nothing new to us, especially to the Larisseans, the Thessalonians, the Athenians, and all the Greeks."[3] The commencement of the spurious Rescript, which is probably taken from one or another of the authentic letters, is as follows:—

> The Emperor Caesar Titus Aelius Adrianus Augustus Pius, chief pontiff, the fifteenth time tribune, thrice Consul, father of his country, to the Common Assembly of Asia, greeting.

This agrees with the year A.D. 140, during which Titus was the third time Consul; and also with that to which I have assigned the presentation of Justinus's *Apology*.

The first consulate of Marcus evidently gave satisfaction, for the Emperor designated him to hold the

[1] vii, 14. [2] H. E. iv, 12, 13. [3] *Ib.* iv, 26.

office again when he himself should be holding it for the fourth time.[1] Although claimed by his official duties, and busied in acquiring the art of government under the guidance of his adoptive father, Marcus nevertheless pursued his studies with the utmost zeal. Titus provided him with further instructors. One of these was Apollonius, whom he imported from Chalcis in the Grecian Archipelago. When he asked him to visit Marcus at the Tiberian Palace, Apollonius said it was for the scholar to come to the teacher, and not for the teacher to go to the scholar. Whereupon Titus laughingly observed: "It was easier for Apollonius to come from Chalcis to Rome than from his own house to the palace."[2] This Apollonius was he who taught Marcus the necessity of purpose and the supremacy of reason. The youthful Caesar was now especially occupied with the instructions of M. Cornelius Fronto, under whose tuition he seems to have been placed in the preceding year. By him he was taught rhetoric; but he records a different obligation, saying:—

> From Fronto I learned to observe what envy and duplicity and hypocrisy are in a tyrant, and that generally those among us who are called Patricians are rather deficient in paternal affection. *Med.* b. i, c. 11.

Fronto was a native of Cirta, an important town in Numidia. He was an advocate and a senator. His oratory is greatly applauded by the ancient critics, but the specimens that survive hardly justify this appreciation. He had unquestionably a profound knowledge of

[1] *Secundum etiam consulem designavit quum ipse quartum pariter iniit.* Cap. M. Ant. 6. (*Cn. Genucio, et L. Aemilio Mamertino secundum consulibus.* Liv. vii, 33.) Liebenham gives A.D. 145 as the year when Titus for the fourth time and Marcus for the second time occupied the consulate. P. 22.

[2] Cap. Ant. P. 10.

words and their use ; but he was somewhat affected and pedantic in his style, especially in the choice of similitudes. We know him very well, and also know Marcus more fully on account of him, for they corresponded frequently and with great familiarity, and much of the correspondence has survived. It shows that Fronto had a warm, enthusiastic nature ; and that even persistent ill health, although it spoiled his career, could not extinguish his gaiety, affability, and hopefulness. His only failings were a love of good cheer and an excessive admiration for friends of eminent position. But in the case of Marcus this predilection was ennobled by a strong personal attachment duly returned. There is abundant evidence that even in the earlier years of his Caesarhood Marcus enjoyed great popularity. The eagerness of the crowds to kiss him, and the amazing frequency of his images in all sorts of places, are facts attested by Fronto at the very time.[1] Inscriptions of the period made in his honour have been discovered in countries as wide apart as Spain and Transilvania, not to mention Africa and Italy. Among these are one near Seville (the ancient Hispalis) by a society of boatmen, or coasting sailors ; another at Fermo on a frieze apparently once attached to the main entrance of the theatre ; another at Rome from the officers and men of the praetorian and urban cohorts ; another at Puteoli from the colony asking the tutelary genius of the place to guard his health ; another at Klausenburg (found near the gate), and made by the descendants of the Galatians whom Trajan had transported beyond the Danube ; and one somewhere or other in Dalmatia. All the above are anterior to the year A.D. 146, when Marcus received the tribunitian power.[2]

[1] *Ad M. Caes.* iii, 13.

[2] Des Vergers, pp. 19–20.

Chapter III

MARRIAGE AND MARRIED LIFE

After recording that Titus designated Marcus to occupy the consulate for the second time, when he himself should be occupying it for the fourth time, Capitolinus, somewhat further on in the same chapter, records briefly that Marcus wedded Faustina, and received the tribunitian power together with other honours.[1] We have seen from the consular list that A.D. 145 was the year when Titus and Marcus were Consuls for the fourth time and the second time respectively.[2] Thus, Capitolinus, who is right about the parallel consulates, places the marriage after the autumn of 144, when Marcus received his second designation to the consular office. But, in placing it immediately before the elevation of Marcus to the tribunitian power, he indicates its date with far greater precision, because Marcus, as inscriptions prove, was exercising this power for the fifteenth time when he ascended the throne;[3] and, therefore, since the tribunal election took place annually on the tenth of December, and since his accession occurred in the year A.D. 161, it follows that he must have got married late in the autumn of A.D. 146 if his marriage shortly preceded his first reception of the aforesaid authority. Mr. George Long says: "M. Antoninus married Faustina, his cousin, the daughter of Pius, probably about A.D. 146, for he had a daughter

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 6.

[2] Liebenham, p. 22. See also Des Vergers, who refers to the *Bull. de l'Inst. archéol.* 1839, p. 89. [3] Des Vergers, pp. 25, 26.

born in 147."[1] Here that fine scholar and excellent man gives an inconclusive reason and omits a necessary reference. In my opinion, the evidence of Capitolinus, who is unusually careful and correct in the chapter which contains it, determines the year and the season of the marriage when account is taken of the established date whereon Marcus received the tribunitian power. This brings us to a point of great interest. For, as Faustina was proposed to Marcus in the summer of A.D. 138, it is clear that, if their marriage did not take place till the late autumn of A.D. 146, he must have kept her waiting for over eight years. Faustina was the only surviving child of a great emperor, whose private fortune was immense. She herself possessed attractions that would have distinguished her in any sphere of life—a comely and graceful appearance, a fascinating air, and a voluptuous disposition. Moreover, she dwelt in the same habitations as Marcus, and, although these were palaces and palatial villas, there must have been frequent opportunities of intercourse, and many a chance for a towardly maiden to play tunes on the heart of her presumptive husband. On his side Marcus, as his letters of that period prove, was very enthusiastic and affectionate. Both he and she were young, his age being only twenty-five at the time when they married. Besides this, he was throughout his whole life the most just, kind, and considerate of men. Why, then, did he subject her to that wearisome delay? It could not be that he wished to sow wild oats before assuming the yoke of marriage, for temperance in all things was one of his principal characteristics. Nor could it be that he desired to consecrate those years to the Muses, for he pursued his studies assiduously after

[1] P. 3.

propitiating Hymen, and even when imperial cares were occupying him at court and in the camp. Again, Marcus and Faustina were not the only persons concerned in the affair. There was her father, who had sent him the proposal of marriage, and her mother, who had brought it. What did they think of his indifference to the charms of their daughter? How came it that the elder lady, the sister of his father, did not urge him to end a false situation? Then, upon her death, why did not her husband press the claim of his motherless child? Further, how came it to pass that the mother of Marcus, who was a most noble lady, and his sister, who was herself married, failed to impress upon him the advantages of such a union and the impropriety of deferring it? Lastly, what would the courtiers, the wits, and the populace of Rome think of such conduct? For Roman law permitted the marriage of girls at the age of twelve, and that of boys at the age of fourteen.[1] Indeed, according to Friedländer, the upper classes did not always await that limit ;[2] and, whether this be true or otherwise, it is certain that patrician maidens usually married soon after reaching the legal term. It is evident that the difference in age between Faustina and Marcus is a point of the first importance in the present inquiry. If Faustina were five years younger than Marcus, she would be offered at twelve and taken at twenty, which, in the circumstances, is sufficiently deplorable ; but if they were the same age she would be kept waiting from seventeen to twenty-five—a thing beyond tolerance. The only excuse conceivable is that perhaps Faustina was younger than Marcus by eight or nine years. In his biography of Lucius we find Capitolinus

[1] Dig. xxiii, 2, 4.

[2] Darstellungen aus der römischen Sittengeschichte, i, 268, 324.

saying that under Hadrian's stipulation Lucius was to receive the daughter of Pius ; but, because he appeared "unequal to her in age," she was given to Marcus, "as we have explained in the *Life of Marcus.*" The text of the corresponding passage here referred to is so corrupt as to be unintelligible. Salmasius, however, with fine intuition, has plausibly restored it. The whole, with the suggested restoration put in italics, is as follows, Marcus being, of course, the subject :—

> The betrothal having been dissolved, which, with the daughter of Lucius Ceionius Commodus, *Hadrian had wished him to contract, Faustina was offered to him, because Verus, to whom Hadrian* had wished *her* to be betrothed, was still unequal in age ; after deliberation, he said he wished to consider the matter.

The betrothal of Lucius to Faustina took place during his eighth year. Had she been much younger than he was, the objection on the score of his age would not have been valid, as they would have been suitable to marry each other after reaching marriageable age in turn. Upon the other hand, if Faustina were older than Lucius, or even the same age as he was, she would be destined to attain nubility before he attained it. Thus they would either have had to wait at least seven years, or else figure as a ridiculous pair. If we take it in this way, there is a possibility that Faustina was not more than sixteen at the time of her marriage, and then a bridegroom of twenty-five would be far more befitting than one of her own age. On this condition the delay in question is excusable, and perhaps even commendable. Still, there may be other difficulties. If Faustina was sixteen years old in A.D. 146, she must have been born in A.D. 130. How does this agree with what is known of her parents? Capitolinus says that

Pius had four children, two sons and two daughters, and that his eldest daughter—already a married woman—died as he was about to set off on his proconsular duties.[1] Pius was only once Consul before he became Emperor, and A.D. 120 was the date of his consulate.[2] Now, consuls who became proconsuls usually assumed proconsular administration at the end of the consular year. If Pius did this, his marriage cannot well be put lower than A.D. 5, and of course it may have occurred at a much earlier date. One writer—who, alas, does not give his authority—says that Pius took up his proconsulate in A.D. 128 or 129. According to the same scribe, Dio asserts that Pius at the time of his adoption "had no male offspring," they having died, as medals testify. The above facts leave much in uncertainty. If the eldest daughter of Pius died in A.D. 129 at an age sufficient to have allowed of her marriage, all his four children might have been born long before that date. Still, if Faustina were the youngest child, A.D. 130 is easily admissible as the year of her birth. Even supposing that the elder daughter of Pius, a married woman, died so early as A.D. 120, his younger daughter might still have been born so late as A.D. 130. For my own part, I believe that where direct evidence fails the historian is fully justified in concluding that actions are determined by the ordinary principles of human conduct, such as the dispositions and the interests of the actors, together with those of the persons by whom the actors are naturally influenced. This leads me to infer that so kind and thoughtful a man as Marcus proved himself to be would never inflict a cruel and insulting delay upon a girl to whom he was engaged, and that, even if he had been capable of such neglect, the remonstrances of her

[1] Cap. Ant. P. 1, 3. [2] Liebenham, p. 20.

parents and of his family, together with the respect due to public opinion, would have brought him to reason. The above considerations would apply though none save people of modest situation had been connected with the case ; but they are far more applicable when, as here, all the parties involved in the affair belonged to the patrician class, and those whose honour was chiefly concerned were the daughter of an emperor, the emperor himself, his wife, and the heir-presumptive to the throne. Hence let us give Marcus the full benefit of the doubt, and suppose that Faustina was only sixteen years of age when he took her to wife.

If the finger of art has faithfully preserved the traits of Marcus and Faustina at the dawn of their maturity, they must have been a goodly pair to behold in the meridian of their youth. There is in my possession an old engraving of Marcus from a medal or a coin, and also a modern picture of Faustina after her reputed bust in the British Museum. These show them at the time of life to which I have first alluded, and in both cases the presentment agrees with the reputation of the persons. Marcus has a refined and harmonious profile, with a touch of delicacy. He wears a straight, neatly trimmed beard of moderate length. His expression is very sweet and gentle, even to the point of suggesting shyness and simplicity. The air is that of a man extremely sensitive, but also extremely patient. Faustina appears as a full-faced, soft-featured woman, with low-dressed, undulating hair, large eyes, and prominent nether lip. Her expression is one of voluptuous contentment, like that of a child rising from the table after a good meal, or of a cat reposing on the hearth after a night of pleasant adventures. It is an agreeable rather than a beautiful face ; and, like others of that type, it is one that a man would not readily become

weary of seeing. The mother of Faustina did not survive to witness her daughter's marriage. Capitolinus says that she died in the third year of her husband's reign, which means some time during the twelve months preceding July 10, A.D. 141 ; and he adds that "many things were said about her excessive freedom and laxity of living which he kept to himself with grief of mind."[1] But the year after her death Titus Antoninus remarked in a letter to Fronto : "I would rather be living with her on Gyaros than without her in the palace."[2] These allusions are not at variance, as any one will admit who is acquainted with human nature ; and besides this the Emperor Julian, misnamed the Apostate, describes Titus Antoninus as "full of moderation, not indeed in the pleasures of sense, but in the conduct of affairs" ;[3] and therefore a woman with the temperament ascribed to his deceased wife would be likely to have charms that a man of his disposition would be sure to miss. Annia Faustina reproduced, probably with exaggeration, her mother's deplorable characteristics. Sextus Aurelius Victor, in his DE CAESARIBUS, a work of unquestionable authenticity, refers to her as one "who burst forth to such a degree of wantonness that, when residing in Campania, she haunted the pleasant parts of the beach for the purpose of choosing from among the sailors, who mostly worked naked, those who were fittest for her abominations." Capitolinus says : "It is well enough established that at Caieta Faustina chose for herself sailors and gladiators."[4] He also mentions that she had four lovers, whose social position allowed them to receive offices of state. These

[1] Cap. ANT. P. 3.

[2] *Ad Ant. P.* Gyaros, now Calario, is an island of the Aegean Sea whereunto the Romans transported criminals.

[3] CAESARES.

[4] Cap. M. ANT. 19. Caieta, now Gaeta, a port of Latium.

were Tertullus, Utilius, Orphetus, and Moderatus.[1] It is impossible to say when Faustina began to display her vicious instincts, but the letters of Fronto to Marcus appear to offer an indication. For in the case of Faustina's first child he insists upon its resemblance both to her and to Marcus ;[2] whereas, in the case of the twins to which she gave birth many years later, he insists only, but very strongly, upon their resemblance to Marcus.[3] I suppose that she tired of her husband after some years of marriage, and then became unfaithful. There is no doubt that her infidelities, if they had commenced before his accession, became flagrant during his reign. If, as I calculate, she was born in 130, she would be only thirty-one in 161, when her husband came to the throne. In 170 Marcus departed for a lengthy war, and it was probably during his absence at this time that her worst excesses occurred. She would then be entering the forties. At that age women who have paid more devotion to Venus than to Diana often begin to grow desperate over the thought of losing their favourite enjoyments, and attempt to protract them at the expense of becoming ridiculous and despicable.

The case of Faustina is far from being exceptional among women of high rank in ancient or in modern times. Before her day Rome had many a dissolute matron of noble blood, and more than one of imperial name. It was not ever thus, for during the earlier ages of their history the Romans exhibited the domestic virtues. The first instance of divorce is said to have been that of Sp. Carvilius Ruga, who about B.C. 234 put away his wife for barrenness.[4] In those times the men worked and fought, and the women attended to

[1] *Ib.* 29. Three different persons named Orphetus became consuls between 161–181 (Liebenham). [2] *Ad M. Caes.* v, 52.
[3] *Ad Ant. Imp.* i, 3. [4] Val. Max. ii, 4.

their homes. Then came a change. The few discovered the advantage of forcing the many to support them in luxury and indolence. It is a profitable method ; but the deity called Nemesis pays it unwelcomed attentions. For whenever the double privilege of riches and idleness appears vice is sure to appear with it ; and when vice comes ruin follows. This is especially observable as regards women, no matter whether they are those who sell themselves to men of wealth or those who belong to the wealthy class. The rich woman has nothing to do but care for her appearance, pay visits, and seek exciting pleasures. This is why the haunts of fashion are encumbered with females who indulge in sexual excesses, in gambling, and in pernicious drugs. Hence the only excuse that can be offered for such persons as Cleopatra, Messalina, Faustina, and their modern rivals in infamy is that they are the victims of the social system under which they exist. As concerns the Romans, it would be a mistake to suppose that they did not perceive the evil of vice, or that they made no attempt to stay its progress. At the very worst period the Stoic philosophers bore to virtue a testimony that has never been surpassed ; and various rulers, often persons of depraved conduct, sought to improve public morals by enactments designed for that laudable end. Here again history repeats itself, and authorities in crises of virtue act like doctors who excise malignant growths that should be cured by treating the system itself. With respect to adultery, it is necessary to distinguish between the vengeance which the Roman law permitted and the penalties which it enjoined. The father of an adulterous wife was allowed to kill her and her lover, provided he did it immediately upon catching them at the offence. The husband had not this liberty, save under exceptional circumstances ; but, nevertheless,

if he slew the guilty pair in a fit of wrath he was not indicted for murder. According to Suetonius, the Emperor Augustus, a man of loose conduct, made an enactment for the restraint of adultery.[1] The same Emperor banished his only daughter, wife of Tiberius, to punish her adulteries;[2] and Tiberius himself, after his accession, caused her to be starved to death. Juvenal, mentioning the edict of Augustus under its title the *Lex Julia*, appears to intimate that the Emperor Domitian, a far worse man than Augustus, confirmed it rigorously.[3] In virtue of this law, the adulterer lost half his property, and the adulteress half of her dowry (*dos*) and the third part of her property (*bona*), while each was banished to some inhospitable island. Ulpian, a celebrated jurist, who died 226 A.D., distinguishes between *culpa* and *mores* as grounds of divorce, representing *mores* as comprising, first adultery, and secondly all other faults. Hence he seems to have taken *culpa* in the restrictive sense of remissness or neglect. Moreover, he says that in case of a divorce granted for *culpa* one-sixth of the dowry was retained in the name of each child, but not for more than three children; which, of course, means that the woman would lose half her dowry. In the case of adultery, however, he mentions the retention of "sixths," but without mentioning "children," whence he seems to imply that the parts otherwise retained for the children were, in this instance, retained for the husband. Finally, he adds that, when it was a question of other *mores*, only the eighth part of the dowry was retained.[4] This is all that need be said regarding the levity of Faustina and the dangers

[1] Octav. 79, 34; Victor, Epit. 1.
[2] Tacit. Ann. i, 53; iii, 24. One of her lovers was punished with death. *Ib.* iv, 44.
[3] Sat. ii, v. 30.
[4] Frag. vi, 1–13. *De Dotibus.*

to which it exposed her under the Roman Law. The next point is the behaviour of Marcus in the affair. If he had been only a unit in the great multitude of heroes and of kings who have had the pose of their laurels or of their diadems disturbed by cornicular protrusions, his manner of wearing these superfluities would have deserved little attention ; but, as he was distinguished by a character the like of which is not to be found among that illustrious mob, his case assumes a rare importance ; for the conduct of exceptional persons in common occurrences is of peculiar interest. Some authors have supposed that Marcus was in ignorance of his wife's deviations. "Madame Dacier," says Gibbon, "assures us (and we may credit a lady) that the husband will always be deceived if the wife condescends to dissemble."[1] But this sage observation does not suit Faustina, for she declined the concession to respectability implied in the maxim, *Si non casté, saltem cauté.* However, it is often said that those most disgraced by their nearest connections are the last to hear of it. There are celebrated examples. Metella, wife of Sulla, became flagrantly notorious through her infidelities at Athens, where her husband was conducting war ; yet he knew nothing about them till they were thrown in his teeth by the enemy. Murcia, wife of Pompey, was so openly unfaithful that every one thought him aware of her misdemeanour ; but at length he learned it, to his consternation, from a companion in arms. Augustus was ignorant of his daughter's escapades long after they became common talk. Bayle, who quotes the first two instances, deriving them from St. Jerome, holds, like him, the above opinion.[2] But it should be liberally interpreted ;

[1] Hist. i, p. 3.

[2] Dic. art. *Heloisa*, note *G.*

for the existence of such ignorance, in the case of spouses, as in that of parents and children, is very precarious, being continually imperilled on all sides by the hope of profit, the desire of vengeance, and the pleasure of giving pain; to say nothing of envy, mischief, and indiscretion. The danger is increased a hundredfold if public characters be in question. Such persons have troops of unknown enemies; and they are affected by innumerable interests. Neither virtue nor popularity affords them any protection, for the one excites hatred and the other envy. Besides, information is so easily given, and informers are so readily concealed. Nor can it be pretended that the natural goodness of Marcus rendered him blind to the faults of other people. For in his *Meditations* he refers over and over again to the necessity of toleration imposed upon us by the frailties and the malice of our neighbours; and he does this in a manner which shows that he entertained no illusions whatever as to the contents of the human heart. But these general considerations are really unnecessary, for Dio says of Marcus: "He indeed abstained from all vices, and committed no faults, either voluntarily or involuntarily; and as to those of others, especially of his wife, he bore them without searching them out or punishing them";[1] while Capitolinus, who describes the repulsive infidelity of Faustina, shows that Marcus was fully acquainted with it. According to him, Marcus surprised her at table with Tertullus, one of her best known lovers; and on one occasion, when Marcus was at the theatre, an incident occurred that would have enlightened a much less intelligent person. The clown, addressing a slave, asked him the name of his own wife's lover; the slave

[1] lxxi, 34.

replied "Tullus," repeating the word three times; but the clown asked it him again, whereupon he exclaimed: "I have told thee thrice (*ter*), Tullus." Of this both the populace and others spoke much, blaming the patience of Marcus.[1] In another, and even more striking, passage Capitolinus states that, with reference to the behaviour of Faustina at Caieta, Marcus was told that he should divorce her if he would not take her life[2]—a piece of advice that illustrates the extreme gravity of the situation. Yet, in spite of all this, Marcus persistently ignored the delinquencies of Faustina, treating her through life and after death with the greatest respect. In a passage of his *Meditations*, which must have been written while she was still living and when he was beyond middle age, he says: "To the gods I am indebted.....that I have such a wife, so obedient, and so affectionate, and so simple."[3] When she died he procured her honours, which shall be recorded on the proper occasion, and which are likely to surprise the reader, if he hears of them then for the first time. Besides forgiving his wife, Marcus returned good for evil by promoting four of her lovers, whose names I have before mentioned.[4] This example of goodness can be paralleled only by the indulgence that he exhibited towards deriders of his conduct. There are cases where men have professed forgiveness of those about to slay them; but the injuries done to Marcus in connection with his wife would appear to a sensitive person harder to bear than the loss of life; and, moreover, he possessed the power to destroy his injurers by a word. It need hardly be said that there has been no little speculation with regard to the motives which determined the conduct of Marcus towards

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 29. [2] *Ib.* 19. [3] i, 17. [4] Cap. M. Ant. 29.

Faustina. Uxoriousness is one of the causes assigned. It might perhaps be argued that Marcus had an exceptionally strong affection for his wife, either because in virtue of his principles he declined the embraces of other women, or because in virtue of her temperament she gave him special pleasure, or perhaps for both these reasons. But against this explanation militates the undoubted fact that men who have a great attachment to their wives, or who find in them a particular delight, are usually very indisposed to let others drink of those sealed fountains. Besides this, Capitolinus, who so distinctly says that Titus supported his wife's folly in silence and in sorrow, attributes to Marcus, under the same circumstances, the silence but not the sorrow. It is likely, then, that he escaped the pangs of jealousy, which he would not have done had he been uxorious. Finally, the very intimate correspondence that passed between Marcus and Fronto bears not the slightest evidence that the former had any exceptional devotion to his wife. He speaks of her with no more tenderness or solicitude than he does of his mother, of his children, and even of his teacher. Those involuntary praises and reminiscences that betray the lover are nowhere to be found ; indeed, the rareness and the casualness of the allusions form their most striking peculiarity. In the *Meditations* there is no reference except that quoted. Two letters of Marcus to Faustina have survived, and in one he declines to follow her wishes respecting an important affair. According to Capitolinus, Marcus, in reply to the suggestion that he should divorce Faustina, said, apparently by way of objection, that if he divorced his wife he ought to return her dowry. Thereupon Capitolinus asks : What could this dowry be but the empire? On this point Bayle recalls that the same objection was made by Burrus when Nero wished to

divorce the innocent Octavia.[1] But the parallel must be used with care. By his wife Messalina, the Emperor Claudius had a daughter, Octavia, and a son, Britannicus. After the death of Messalina he espoused his niece Agrippina, who had a son, Nero, by a former husband. Agrippina poisoned Claudius, and violated his wishes by obtaining Nero the empire. Nero, who had married Octavia, poisoned Britannicus. Hence he did not get the empire by marriage. Burrus, who was closely connected with Nero, having been his governor, must have known how matters stood; but, apparently, he desired to keep up the fiction that Claudius had promised Nero the empire in giving him his daughter. Still, the fact remains that, in the opinion of Burrus, an emperor whose empire came with his wife should renounce it on getting a divorce. But this judgment does not apply in the case of Marcus, as he did not inherit the empire as his wife's dowry. For Hadrian had made Titus Antoninus his heir on condition that Titus should do the same for Marcus; and Titus was bound to secure him this inheritance, whether he thought fit, or otherwise, to give him his daughter in marriage. The alliance was clearly to the advantage of Titus, for he not only obtained an excellent son-in-law, but also preserved his family in the imperial rank. Nevertheless, Bayle agrees with Capitolinus in believing that Marcus did regard the empire as his wife's dowry, and that to keep it he refused a divorce. Bayle declares that in thus acting Marcus reconciled the character of a philosopher with that of an emperor. For, like a philosopher, he declined an unjust deed; and, like an emperor, he attributed high value to "greatness and authority." Now, it is impossible to over-estimate the fine discrimination and the impartial justice that Bayle usually displays in his

[1] Dic. art. *Lewis*, note *G*.

criticism of conduct; but, still, it appears as if in the present instance his judgment was at fault. If, viewing the empire as his wife's dowry, Marcus thought that it should be renounced in case she were divorced, he acted uprightly in not divorcing her and yet retaining it; but if his "greatness and authority" could not be retained without the retention of a scandalous wife, he behaved infamously in keeping her to keep them. Even the facile morality of a West End club would ensure the banishment of any member known to profit by a wife whose multifarious infidelities had reached the ears of all men. The only way out of the difficulty is to suppose that Marcus preferred "greatness and authority," not for their amenities, but for their responsibilities; and accepted them at the price of personal sacrifice. The fact that he scrupled to retain the empire in discarding her with whom it had been obtained would strongly support the view that he scrupled to escape its burdens even at the cost of exposing himself to the most injurious misinterpretations; while the circumstance of his taking the risk must singularly redound to his honour. For there is nothing rarer or nobler than moral courage, and the highest degree of that virtue is evinced by performing a duty for which an infamous motive is likely to be assigned. For my part, I am inclined to think that the dowry to which Marcus referred was his wife's private fortune, and not the empire. Titus Antoninus must have been very rich, and Faustina was his only surviving child.[1] But a time came when Marcus, to avoid over-taxing his subjects for a grave war, disposed of all his property, together with the silks and jewels of his wife;[2] and therefore it

[1] Patrimonium privatum in filiam contulit; and Privatum patrimonium filiae relinquit. Cap. Ant. P. 7, 12.

[2] Cap. M. Ant. 17; Eutrop. viii, 6; Victor, Epit. 16.

is very probable that on this occasion her private fortune went the same way as her dresses and her ornaments. If such were the case, and if the above conversation took place shortly after the sale referred to, Marcus would find himself unable to restore the dowry upon obtaining a divorce. Certainly, if the proceedings had taken place under the *Lex Julia*, there would have been a considerable reduction in the amount due; but Marcus, being, like Joseph, "a righteous man," and therefore unwilling to make his wife "a public example" to save his purse, would have been obliged to get the divorce by mutual consent, in which case the full return of the dowry was usual. On the present supposition, as on the previous one, it is presumable that Marcus, in refusing divorce because he thought it implied the obligation of returning the dowry, sacrificed himself to his sense of duty; the only difference being that, in the first instance, the motive was to serve the public welfare, and, in the second, to act honestly. It cannot be denied that here the latter of these motives involves the higher moral worth, because the sanction was feebler and evasion more facile. The foregoing observations pre-suppose that Marcus spoke seriously, but it seems far more likely that he answered a fool according to his folly. He did not allege the dowry as the reason for not seeking a divorce. All he said was that the divorce would mean the losing of the dowry. Probably he knew that his interlocutor could not understand any high motive; and, therefore, he acted on the principle of giving thistles to an ass.[1] The real clue to

[1] In any case, Marcus does not here repudiate the charges against Faustina. Previously, however, in chapter 23, Capitolinus introduces, without any connection on either side, the following passage:—

There was, as we have said above, talk of comedians

his conduct must be sought in the *Meditations*. There we read :—

> Every soul, the philosopher says, is involuntarily deprived of truth ; consequently, in the same way, it is deprived of justice, and temperance, and benevolence, and everything of the kind. It is most necessary to bear this constantly in mind, for thus thou wilt be more gentle towards all (vii, 63). He who would not have the bad man do wrong is like the man who would not have a fig-tree bear juice in the figs and infants cry out, and whatever else must of necessity be. For what must a man do who has such a character? (xiii, 16). With what art thou discontented? With the badness of men? Recall to thy mind this conclusion, that rational animals exist for one another, and that to endure is part of justice, and that men do wrong involuntarily (iv, 3). All these things happen to them by reason of their ignorance of what is good and evil (ii, 1). The man is compelled —for what else could he do? (x, 30). When thou art offended with any man's shameless conduct, immediately ask thyself : Is it possible, then, that shameless men should not be in the world? It is not possible. Do not, then, require what is impossible. For this man also is one of the shameless men, who must of necessity be in the world.....For at the same time that thou dost remind thyself that it is impossible such kind of men should not exist, thou wilt become more kindly towards every one individually.....Besides wherein hast thou been injured? For thou wilt find that no one among those against whom thou art irritated has done anything by which thy mind could be made worse ; but that which is evil to thee and

beloved by his wife. But all these [slanders?] he chased away in his letters.

Whether this passage is genuine, or simply an interpolation, I cannot say ; but certainly the work now contains no other reference of the kind.

harmful has its foundation only in the mind (ix, 42). It is peculiar to man to love even those who do wrong. And this happens if, when they do wrong, it occurs to thee that they are kinsmen, and that they do wrong through ignorance and unintentionally, and that soon both of you will die; and, above all, that the wrongdoer has done thee no harm, for he has not made thy ruling faculty worse than it was before (vii, 22). Generally, wickedness does no harm at all to the universe; and particularly the wickedness [of one man] does no harm to another (viii, 55). When thou art troubled about anything, thou hast forgotten.....that a man's wrongful act is nothing to thee (xii, 26). Inquire of thyself, as soon as thou wakest from sleep, whether it will make any difference to thee if another does what is just and right. It will make no difference (x, 13). No wrongful act of another brings shame on me (xi, 18). When a man has done thee any wrong, immediately consider with what opinion about good or evil he has done the wrong. For when thou hast seen this, thou wilt pity him, and wilt neither wonder nor be angry (vii, 26). For it is no way right to be offended with men; but it is thy duty to care for them, and to bear with them gently (ix, 3). If thou art able, correct by teaching those who do wrong; but if thou canst not, remember that indulgence is given thee for this purpose (ix, 11). The gods who are immortal are not vexed because during so long a time they must tolerate continually men such as they are and so many of them bad; and besides this they also take care of them in all ways. But thou, who art destined to end so soon, art thou weary of enduring the bad? (vii, 70).

This lucid teaching bears every mark of sincerity; and, whether true or false, it offers such an adequate explanation of the conduct of Marcus towards Faustina that to seek any other is quite unnecessary.

Chapter IV

CHILDREN

Many olive branches clustered round the table of Marcus, whencesoever they may have sprung. We have :—

I, Domitia Faustina. "Our Faustina," as Marcus calls her in a letter to Fronto ; who, in reply, calls her "thy daughter Faustina."[1] These letters mention the child's illness—her "little fevers," and "little cough," as Marcus tenderly expresses it. She died probably in early childhood, certainly before Marcus became emperor, for in the mausoleum of Hadrian was found the inscription : *Domitia Faustina M. Aurelii Caesaris filia, imp. Antonini Augusti P. P. neptis.*[2]

II, Matidia (?). Very shortly the reader will learn that Marcus had a daughter named Lucilla, who was betrothed upon his accession in March, A.D. 161, but whose marriage, evidently because of her youth, was deferred for over two years. Now we are told that when Marcus sent Lucilla to the East to meet her bridegroom he put her in charge of a sister,[3] who must have exceeded her in age, for, being herself recently nubile, she would not have a younger sister married, widowed, or divorced. The habits of her people render it quite credible that Lucilla was but ten years old at the date of her betrothal. In that case A.D. 151

[1] *Ad M. Caes.* iv, 11, 12.

[2] Naber, p. 72, note.

[3] *Filiam suam nupturam, commissam sororis curae, eamdemque locupletatam, Brundisium deduxit,* Cap. M. Ant. 9. The only sister of Marcus was then dead. *Ib.* 7.

would be the year of her birth, and therefore, as the marriage of her parents occurred in A.D. 146, she might easily have been the third of their successive children. Even although her birth had occurred in A.D. 149, there would still have been time for her parents to have had two other children in succession. The following reasons suggest that "Matidia" was the name of the sister who accompanied Lucilla on the journey above described. All the children of Marcus, as far as is known, had what are called "family names"; and among the adoptive ancestry of Faustina there was a lady named Matidia, from whom Faustina's daughters were to receive a handsome legacy. This bequest is discussed between Marcus and Fronto,[1] and circumstances prove that it was inherited before Marcus reached the throne.[2] Moreover, in a letter to Fronto, which Naber places shortly after that event, Marcus says: "Our little girls are staying at Matidia's in the town, and therefore they cannot keep coming to me at night because of the chilliness."[3] Thus it is probable that the Matidia here referred to was the eldest surviving daughter of Marcus, and that she was then a very youthful matron, in whose house her still more youthful sisters were temporarily residing. Her husband may have been the son of Claudius Severus, under whom Marcus studied the Peripatetic philosophy. The Emperor Heliogabalus (218–222) is said to have espoused the great-grand-daughter of Marcus and of Claudius Severus.[4]

III, Lucilla. She bore the name of her father's mother. On the accession of Marcus in the spring of 161 she was betrothed to Lucius,[5] but the marriage

[1] *Ad M. Caes.* ii, 16, 17. [2] Naber, p. 37. [3] *Ad Ant. Imp.* ii, 1.
[4] Dio, lxxix, 5. The correct name is Elagabalus. Gib. i, p. 184. [5] Cap. M. Ant. 7.

was postponed. Early in 162 Lucius departed for Syria to conduct the Parthian war, which lasted four years. In the middle of this campaign, and therefore some time in 164, Marcus proposed to take her out to her bridegroom ; but, on hearing that people said he was making a pretext to diminish the glory of Lucius by ending the war himself, he desisted from the project, accompanying her only to the port of Brundisium (the modern Brindisi), and dispatching her thence with Civica, uncle of Lucius, and in charge of her sister. With his customary simplicity he ordered the proconsuls that his daughter should not be met on the journey. Lucius, having heard that Marcus intended bringing Lucilla to the East, and having reasons to fear that, if this occurred, Marcus would hear little about him of a flattering nature, decided to avert the misfortune by meeting the party at Ephesus, a city fairly remote from the scene of his activities.[1] Since Lucius was a man of agreeable appearance, and since his tastes and those of Lucilla were much alike, it is probable that the pair would spend happy moments, although there are stories of scandals in their household.[2] In 169 Lucilla became a widow, but did not long remain in that condition. According to Plutarch, Numa, whose year was composed of ten months, fixed this period as the longest duration of mourning, and before its end widows could not marry without disgrace ; but those who were unable to support so long an abstinence from connubial delights might abridge their privation by the expiatory offering of a cow with a calf. It does not appear that Lucilla had any thought of giving this superfluous labour to the priest. But her father, who was about to leave the country on what threatened to be a long and difficult

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 9 ; Ver. 7. [2] *Ib.* 10.

war, decided in favour of the ceremony. For before the end of her mourning he gave Lucilla a second time in marriage. Knowing the tastes of his daughter's maternal ancestry, and perhaps crediting her with a similar disposition, he would naturally think that in the absence of a father's care she needed a husband's protection. The design was excellent, but the execution might have been effected with more discretion. For in place of a still young and very lively spouse, of noble origin and imperial rank, he gave her one who was old and grave, besides being of private station and of insignificant family. This was Claudius Pompeianus, son of a Roman knight, whose stock belonged to Antioch, but was of little renown. The bridegroom had distinguished himself in war, and he possessed all sorts of good qualities except those specially required by his new position. Hence it will surprise no one to hear that both Lucilla and Faustina lifted up their hands and their voices against the match. But Marcus was firm, and it took place.[1] This would be late in 169 or early in 170. How Lucilla behaved at first is not known, but after her father's death, which occurred in 180, her character became thoroughly bad. She despised her husband ; she was jealous of the position occupied by the new empress, her brother's wife ; and she accomplished the difficult task of rivalling her brother himself in debauchery.[2] Finally, she joined in a conspiracy to take his life. This failed, and she was banished to the island of Capreae (now Capri), and subsequently put to death.[3] It would appear that Lucilla had a

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 20. Dr. Bodek [p. 152] thinks that Marcus was influenced by his admiration of the Hebrew Code, which permitted widows to re-marry three months after the death of their husbands. Jebamoth 41.*a* Mischna.

[2] Dio, lxxii, 4.

[3] Dio. *Ib.* Lamp. Com. 4.

daughter by her first husband, and that Claudius Pompeianus had a son by a former wife. For Dio says that the person who, on the above occasion, set out to murder Commodus was a young man named Claudius Pompeianus, who had married Lucilla's daughter, and who was also Lucilla's lover. In any case she had a son during her second marriage, for Spartianus says that the Emperor Caracallus (211–217), a monster of cruelty, executed one Pompeianus, grandson of Marcus, being the son of his daughter Lucilla and of Pompeianus, to whom she was married after the death of the Emperor Verus—i.e., Lucius.[1]

IV, Cornificia. She was named after her father's only sister. In a letter from Marcus to Fronto, which is assigned to the second year of his reign, 162, he excuses him from coming to Lorium for the birthday of Cornificia,[2] so that she must have been still at her parents' home. I suggest that the husband of Cornificia was Petronius Mamertinus. Lampridius says that Commodus, son of Marcus, executed this man, and also Antoninus, son of him and of his own sister ;[3] but he does not say which sister of Commodus was the one in question. Cornificia was notoriously the mistress of a married man named Pertinax,[4] who was, or had been, one of her father's generals, and who occupied the throne for a little over two months upon the death of her brother Commodus. Pertinax died by violence in 193 at the age of 66 years ;[5] so that he would be much older than the partner of his illicit delights. A tragic end awaited Cornificia. The Emperor Caracallus resolved for some reason or other to put her to death, and in pretended

[1] CAR. 3. He is usually called Caracalla.
[2] *Ad Ant. Imp.* i, 1.
[3] COM. 7.
[4] *Ipse Cornificiae infamissime dicitur adhaesisse*, Cap. PERTIN. 13.
[5] Dio, lxxiii, 10 ; Liebenham, p. 109.

respect for her origin he gave her the choice of how to die. Bursting into tears, and recalling her father, her grandfather, and her brother, she exclaimed at last: "Unhappy little soul, shut up in a wretched body, depart, set thyself at liberty. Let them see, even if they would not, that thou art the daughter of Marcus Antoninus." Then, putting off her ornaments and preparing herself, she opened her veins and died.[1] *Bon sang ne peut mentir.*

V, Fadilla. She was named after the mother and the sister of Titus Antoninus. Along with Cornificia, she would be one of the two or perhaps more girls whom Marcus referred to as staying "at Matidia's," and whom he called *parvolae*, which implies their tender age. They must have been the same unmarried girls who, five years later, rode with their father and Lucius in the chariot of victory at the Parthian Triumph.[2] Fadilla did not marry till after the middle of A.D. 175, for about then Faustina, in a letter to Marcus, speaks of her as being "a young virgin," suffering from disorders incident to her age.[3] Eventually she became the wife of Anstitius [Antistius] Burrus, whom her brother Commodus executed.[4] She must have had something of her father's indulgent disposition; for, after the cruel wretch had caused the death of her sister Lucilla and that of her husband Burrus, she saved his life by entering his presence at the risk of his displeasure to announce that a furious mob was likely to storm the palace and to tear him in pieces.[5]

VI, Antoninus and Commodus, twins. These were born on August 31, A.D. 161. It is reported that while

[1] Dio, lxxvii, 16, note.
[2] Cap. M. Ant. 12.
[3] Gall. Avid. Cas. 10.
[4] Dio, lxxix, 5, note 9; Lamp. Com. 6. Liebenham gives "Imp. Commodus iii [and] Antistius Burrus" as consuls for A.D. 181.
[5] Herodian, i, 13.

big with them their mother dreamed that she brought forth two serpents, one of which exceeded the other in ferocity.[1] In the letter quoted under the notice of Cornificia, Marcus says, "Our chick Antoninus coughs somewhat less," and in his reply Fronto observes that a milder climate and a good wet nurse "will appease our chick's little cough." But the child was not saved, for he died at the age of four years.[2] The other twin was called Aurelius after his maternal grandfather, and Lucius Commodus after his adoptive uncle. I shall have much to say of him on a later occasion. The only thing necessary to mention here is the repulsive fact recorded by Lampridius: *Commodus Lucillam sororem, quum eam compressisset, occidit: sororibus dein suis ceteris, ut dicitur, constupratis.*[3] As the text stands, the connection of *compressisset* with *occidit* implies that Commodus, after violating Lucilla, took her life. But one critic proposes to read *Capreas misisset* instead of *eam compressisset.* The emendation is not supported by the context. *Constupratis*, the word applied in the case of "his other sisters," means either that he ravished them or that he seduced them: I cannot say which is the sense intended. After an infamous reign of nearly thirteen years, Commodus was strangled in his bath on December 31, 192, at the instigation of conspirators.[4]

The deplorable manners of Faustina and the base disposition of Commodus naturally caused many to think that he was not the son of Marcus, but of one or other of the sailors and gladiators to whom she had dispensed her favours. Among the populace, however, a tale circulated to the effect that Faustina, while looking on at a defile of gladiators, fell so madly in

[1] Lamp. Com. 1. [2] Lamp. Com. 1. [3] *Ib.* 5. [4] Dio, lxxii, 22.

love with one of them that she became ill and confessed the matter to her husband, and that he, having consulted the Chaldeans, learned from them that the gladiator whom Faustina loved should be slain, and that, after laving a certain part of her body with his blood, she should couch with her husband; which being done, the passion of Faustina vanished, and Commodus was born in due time.[1] *Praestet fides! Sancta Simplicitas!*

VII, [Annius[2]] Verus, entitled Caesar. He was named after his father's father. The gods loved him as they had loved his little brother Antoninus, for they took him away at the early age of seven years, just after the marriage of his sister Lucilla to Claudius Pompeianus, and just before the departure of his father on the campaign that hastened the wedding. The removal of a growth from beneath an ear occasioned the child's death. His father mourned him fifteen days, comforted the physicians who had attended him, and then returned to the affairs of state. The fêtes commemorative of Jupiter, the Best and Greatest, were being held at the time. To avoid spoiling these, he excused a public mourning, deeming it sufficient to honour his son with statues, including a golden image for ceremonial conveyance round the circus, and to have him named in the Salian Hymns.[3] The medals and statues representing Annius Verus prove that, like his brother Lucius Commodus, he bore a great resemblance to their putative father.[4]

VIII, A Female Child, name unknown. Philostratus, relating a very interesting incident, which shall be reported in due course, mentions the fact that when Marcus and Faustina resided at Sirmium [during the

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 19.
[2] Des Vergers, p. 74.
[3] Cap. M. Ant. 21.
[4] Des Vergers, p. 74.

Second Germanic War, A.D. 170–175] they had with them a little daughter who could not yet speak plainly, and who was in the habit of coaxing her father and caressing his knee.[1] This could not be Fadilla, who in A.D. 175 was already "a young virgin," with characteristic infirmities, as we have previously learned from her mother.

In concluding this chapter, I would draw attention to a passage where Lampridius distinctly affirms that three daughters of Marcus survived their brother Commodus.[2] But Faustina and Lucilla predeceased him, while Cornificia and Fadilla are the only survivors whose names are recorded.

[1] SOPHISTS ii, 1 (11). He quotes Herodes Atticus as saying that the child was three years old. [2] COM. 17.

Chapter V

EARLIER CORRESPONDENCE OF MARCUS AND FRONTO

A great number of letters, written or received by Fronto, and also parts of his other writings, were discovered in the Ambrosian Library at Milan during the second decade of the nineteenth century. The discoverer was the librarian himself, Angelo Mai, a famous scholar, who afterwards became a Cardinal. He edited the collection somewhat carelessly, and, in 1815, gave it out from Milan. Improved editions were published next year in Germany by two successive critics, Hermann and Niebuhr. Then, in 1823, Mai, who, after becoming custodian of the Vatican Library, had discovered therein other fragments of the work, published these and the former portions at Rome. In this edition he did not trouble to amend his defective treatment of the old parts, but when dealing with the new ones he exhibited far more care and skill than was displayed by him on the previous occasion. In 1846 Mai republished the work without further collation, and with very little correction. Before and after that date studies on the text appeared in various periodicals, mostly Teutonic. Finally, S. A. Naber prepared an edition, issued in 1867 by Teubner of Leipzig. This was based not only upon the earlier editions, but also upon the results of an examination made by G. N. Du Rieu in the case of the two primary sources—namely, the Ambrosian and the Vatican. Here it is worth noting that both these once belonged to the collection

of Columbanus, an Irish saint and poet of the seventh century, who founded a rich library at his home in Bobbio, a lonely and almost inaccessible town couched among the mountains between Milan and Genoa. The book itself (bearing on the first page the name of the saint) was remarkable for the fact that the Acts of a Church Council held at Chalcedon A.D. 451 had been written over the original matter. Hence the task of deciphering this proved extremely difficult; and, alas, some of the means employed in the mechanical part of the undertaking occasionally destroyed what they were intended to reveal. But let us be grateful for the wealth discovered, remembering how imperfect were the resources then at the command of such explorers.[1]

As far as letters are concerned, the work gives the correspondence of Fronto—first, with Marcus as Caesar (5 books); second, with Marcus as Emperor (2 books); third, with Lucius as Emperor (2 books); fourth, with Antoninus Pius (1 book); and, fifth, with various friends of his own rank (2 books); besides which it also contains two or three of his Greek epistles, and a few of his Latin essays, more or less epistolary in form. We have now to do with the first of the above divisions, the five books entitled in the index *Ad M. Caesarem.* Of these, the first book has 8 letters and 21 pages; the second, 17 letters and 14 pages; the third, 21 letters and 17 pages; the fourth, 13 letters and 17 pages; and the fifth, 49 letters and 15 pages. The text presents many corruptions and mutilations. It is obvious that intermediate epistles are sometimes wanting, and that the arrangement of the correspondence is often defective. For example, in letter 58 of

[1] See Naber's *Prolegomena* and DICTIONARIUM EDITIONUM..... DR. W. HEBENSTREIT.....VINDOBONAE, 1828. M. Des Vergers refers to Mai as "Cardinal."

Book V Fronto complains to Marcus of pain in his shoulder, and says that he cannot write with his own hand ; whereas, in epistle 9, Book IV, he mentions his having received inquiries from Marcus, although he had written him before about the pain in his shoulder and the inability to use his hand for writing. Whether the collection is a faithful copy of one no less confused, or whether it is an injudiciously arranged selection of material taken from some larger and better ordered book, cannot be determined. A principal source of confusion is that notes relating to attacks of disease have been wrongly connected, so that illnesses which took place at quite different times are made to look as if they had occurred at one and the same time. Thus, epistles 10–19 of Book V deal with three separate events of that kind, referable to three distinct periods, the sufferers being—first, Faustina (10, 11) ; second, Marcus and Fronto, simultaneously (12–17) ; and, third, Fronto alone (18, 19). But, upon the whole, the disorder, however great, is less than it appears, and therefore I have not scrupled to follow the scribe's arrangement in a fair number of cases. Moreover, even where the true sequence has been disturbed it may occasionally be traced from inter-related allusions, and in this way some neat serials are obtainable. Except as regards many letters in A.D. 143 and one letter in A.D. 146, the correspondence has no indication of date. But I have put below A.D. 146 all the communications which do not refer to the wife or to the children of Marcus, and which do not connect with any containing such references. Naber, wrongly assuming A.D. 139 as the year when Marcus and Faustina got married, suggests a scheme of arrangement in harmony with his false assumption, thereby greatly exaggerating the confusion of the present order. This, whatever its defects may

be, supplies acceptable evidence against any such early date for that marriage, as the following analysis clearly proves. For Books I and III never refer to the wife or the children of Marcus, and they do not present anything that connects with such references in other places. Books II and IV have nothing of the kind except two letters apiece, and in each case these letters are interdependent. Book V, on the contrary, mentions Faustina, or her offspring, or both, in no less than ten letters, none of which are consecutive, and most of which have corroborative connections—in fact, she is there credited with at least two maternities. Besides all this, the correspondence which I have assigned to years preceding A.D. 146—the most probable date for the marriage of Marcus—contains numerous references to his mother, these being particularly remarkable under the form of salutations occurring in letters which are certainly pairs. Thus we have: "My lady saluteth thee"; "Salute the lady, thy mother" (III, 7, 8). "Salute the lady"; "My mother saluteth thee" (V, 12, 13, 14, 15). "My lady saluteth thee"; "Salute the lady [thy] mother" (V, 28, 29). In fact, from nearly one hundred letters assignable to this period, there is no evidence whatsoever that any woman but his mother then figured in the life of Marcus. Naber gives A.D. 139 to 145 as the limits of the present correspondence.[1] This was, firstly, because he assigned the marriage of Marcus to A.D. 139; and, secondly, because he thought that a certain letter (IV, 13) which mentions the age of Marcus as twenty-five years was the last of the series.

These assertions are both alike false. The date attributed to the marriage is contradicted by the earliest

[1] *Prolegomena* and *Index*.

evidence, and the inferences drawn from the letter are absurd, as will appear when it comes to be examined. The truth is that the correspondence probably begins in A.D. 139 and extends some few years beyond the marriage of Marcus in A.D. 146, the latter determination being warranted by the fact that among the letters there are some which refer to two or more of his daughters. It is my duty to say that, although the letters which I have spread over the years A.D. 139 to A.D. 146 inclusive do seem to have been written during that period, yet nevertheless, with the exception of a goodly number in A.D. 143 and a single one in A.D. 146, they cannot have their particular years assigned to them with certainty.

It is now time to say something about the nature of the epistles in question. Both parts—that to Marcus as Caesar and that to Marcus as Emperor—present the same characteristics. The biographical notices are few, and chiefly confined to matters of health, while the historical commemorations are still fewer and less interesting, which is especially strange in the case of the second series, for when this was being written great events were occurring. The complete absence of speculative and practical philosophy and the avoidance of any important subject other than the art of expression are equally remarkable. The style suffers from the faults of the age: excessive indulgence in archaic locutions, etymological gymnastics, and recondite similitudes. The effort to be smart and surprising, which is so opposed to classical taste, appears with distressing frequency. These defects occur even in the short letters, of which there is a considerable number. On its good side the correspondence has one prominent and very noble feature: the profound and impassioned affection displayed for each other by the correspondents. Marcus treats Fronto with revering love and idolatrous admira-

tion, while Fronto is inflamed and enraptured by this perfervid devotion. There is nothing at all like it in Pliny, and rarely anything even distantly like it in Cicero. Another and more valuable feature of the letters is their witness to the fact that Marcus exhibited in youth the same just, kindly, and indulgent disposition that he manifested in later years ; this fact proving that in his case goodness was native and not acquired. Finally, the correspondence affords many precious glimpses of a beautiful domestic life, the existence of which at Rome in that age will greatly surprise those whose notions of Roman morals have been exclusively derived from the false pictures drawn by clerical authors to create a prejudice in favour of their religion ; nor will the astonishment be diminished by the circumstance that the fine qualities above implied were brought forth in kings' houses, places but seldom regarded as hotbeds of the virtues.

139[1]

In ancient Greece there flourished for long years a class of men called sophists, who used to go about discussing philosophical problems, but who did this more to exhibit their skill in arguing than to discover the truth. Towards the end of the first century of our era, and for a hundred years or more afterwards, the name was applied to the members of a profession very different from that of their predecessors in the title. These did not trouble about philosophy, but directed their attention to the art of public speaking. Some of them went from place to place, making discourses on literary, mythological, or historical themes. Others remained in particular towns such as Athens, Corinth, or Ephesus, and these had numerous scholars whom

[1] III, 2–6 [*Graec.* 6, 8, 7]; III, 1, 7, 8, V, 1–4; Naber gives III, 1–8 [*Graec.* 6, 8, 7]; V, 1–4.

they instructed in the various kinds of eloquence applicable to forensic and other purposes, especially that of distraction. In all cases the treatment and not the subject was the thing of importance. The most illustrious of these sophists in his own day was Herodes Atticus, one of the three persons who instructed Marcus in Grecian oratory ; and it would appear that the earliest letters still preserved in the correspondence between Marcus and Fronto are some dealing with a memorable incident in the life of that famous ornament of the later sophists. This man was of aristocratic birth. His parents had large possessions, and, by inheriting both from them and from other persons, he became immensely rich. His generosity, private and public, equalled his resources. He provided a magnificent racecourse near Athens, and in honour of his wife adorned that city with a theatre famous for its cedar roof and beautiful carving. He built another at Corinth, smaller than that at Athens, but still worthy to rank among the few notable ones of its class. He raised monuments on spots of interest, and filled the temples with statuary. He honoured Apollo with a racecourse at Delphi, and Zeus with an aqueduct at Olympia. For the Thessalians and others dwelling by the Maliac Gulf he constructed medicinal baths at Thermopylae. He restored Oricum in Epirus from a state of dilapidation, and provided Canusium in Italy with good water. To various towns in Euboea, Peloponnesus, and Boeotia he rendered important services. These achievements, however, left him unsatisfied, and he longed to pierce the Isthmus of Corinth, deeming it a splendid feat to sever a continent and join two seas. But he feared to seek the Emperor's permission lest he should appear determined to perform what Nero had not ventured to attempt. Once, when standing by the Isthmus, Herodes said to a friend of his

biographer: "I would be Neptune, but no one will permit it." Asked to explain his meaning, he replied that he had tried hard to bequeath to posterity some memorial attesting the existence of A MAN, but that he seemed not to have reached this glory. On being reminded that his orations and his constructions could not be surpassed, he said that his works would perish in time, and that his speeches were exposed to destructive criticism; but that the piercing of the Isthmus would be an immortal work, almost incredible for human nature, and seeming to demand Neptune rather than a man. It is not surprising to find that, with this proud ambitious character, Herodes, in spite of his benefactions, was not always beloved by the poor. He had the masterfulness of the aristocrat who enjoys the dependence of the people, and would much rather make them presents than admit their rights. When governing the Free Cities of Proconsular Asia, he sometimes displayed his social predilections in a tyrannical way, and thus came into collision with the proconsuls, for it was their duty to see that justice got fairly administered throughout the province.[1] From the letters now in question the reader will see that the crimes of which Herodes was accused at the time of the correspondence evinced his cruel and arrogant disposition; while subsequently he will find that Herodes was impeached many years later for similar offences. As regards the present matter our knowledge is as follows: Marcus, hearing that Fronto was to take part with others in an indictment of Herodes, implored him to be lenient. Fronto, says Marcus, has often inquired what he could do to give him pleasure. Now is the opportunity. People seem likely to hear from Fronto, not a benign speech, but a fierce invective;

[1] Philostratus, SOPHISTS ii, 1 (1)–(6).

and there is none to admonish him, for his enemies prefer to see him deliver an unmeasured attack, while his friends are apprehensive that their good will may be suspected if they urge him to restraint. Therefore, Marcus, at the risk of appearing "a temerarious councillor, or an audacious youngster," or even a partisan of the adversary, begs Fronto to mitigate his attack, promising to remember the obligation if conferred. "But," Fronto may protest, "if he provokes me, shall I not repay him?" Marcus thinks there would be more praise for Fronto if he did not respond, though provoked. But if provoked he might be excused. To smooth difficulties, Marcus has also solicited restraint from Herodes, as he believes with success. The grandfather of Marcus, P. Calvisius, brought up Herodes, and Herodes educated Marcus, who therefore desires to have the odious affair transacted as decently as possible. Fronto replies that Marcus, who surpasses his elders in prudence, need not excuse his intervention. As Herodes enjoys the protection of Marcus, he is not likely to be a bad man. Fronto would never have dared to injure him with a word, had he known him to be his lord's friend. Undoubtedly he ought not to reproach Herodes with anything except the matter in question. But the facts at issue are atrocious, and he would like advice touching their exposition. The case is that of freemen cruelly beaten, one being killed; of an impious son rejecting his father's supplication; of damnable severity and avarice: a villain is to be arraigned. Must he accuse without reserve? In no case will he introduce the manners or the past life of the accused. But, if given a free hand, he will make the accusation taste of gall; and even should he happen to call Herodes "an ignoramus or a Greekling," it would not be deadly. He adds that he loves his master's letters, and begs him to

write with his own hand. Hardly was this missive sealed when it occurred to Fronto that some one else engaged in the prosecution might assail Herodes with a severity displeasing to Marcus, and therefore he sent him a brief note soliciting his own exemption from blame in such circumstances. He names three others about to act with him : Capriolus, Marcianus, and Villianus.

Replying to Fronto, Marcus said that everything connected with the charge should be stated, but that anything solely respective to the personal feelings of Fronto—however just and provoked—should be suppressed. The only point that gave him concern, he added, was lest Fronto should utter a word beneath his character. Fronto responded that these injunctions had his full acquiescence, but that he desired to excuse himself beforehand, should the heat of the debate cause him to fall unawares into any excess in looks, tones, words, or gestures ; adding that tension is demanded even in playing games. How the affair ended does not appear ; but from letters of after years it is evident that Fronto and Herodes were reconciled.[1] In another letter assignable to this year Marcus expresses his solicitude about the health of Fronto, and says that he has heard of him having written something in Greek, and that he himself will do the same if only to try whether what he has never learned will favour him as easily as what he has learned forsakes him. He adds that a year ago, at the same time and place, he had been consumed with yearning for his absent mother, as he now is for his absent master. Fronto obligingly forwarded his Greek sketch—a rather indifferent performance. Marcus, in a letter sadly mutilated, expresses rapturous admiration. He had been away two months, probably at the vintage

[1] *Et Herodes te amat*, says Marcus to Fronto, IV, 2.

which he attended annually with his adoptive father. It would seem that towards the end of this year Marcus was preparing a speech of thanksgiving for the honours received by him from the Emperor, and that he was about to deliver his oration on the date of his assuming the consulate. In a decapitated epistle Fronto warns him against using in the senate, or in a popular assembly, antique words and obscure or unusual figures, reminding him that the eloquence of a Caesar should be like a trumpet, not a flute. The health of Fronto was precarious, and it is clear that he suffered tortures from gout and rheumatics. In answer to some letter or other now lost, Marcus approves him for taking rest, and for submitting his arm to treatment. He then speaks of having been on the reading-couch from the seventh hour, and of having finished ten similitudes. With respect to the ninth, he solicits the assistance of Fronto. Off the coast of Campania lies the little island of Ischia, then called Aenaria in memory of Aeneas having first landed there. Marcus reports that upon this island is a lake, and in this lake another island, likewise inhabited. He thinks the circumstance would serve as an illustration, but he does not know how to apply it. Fronto, strangely uncertain whether the island lies in the Ionian, the Tyrrhenian, or perhaps rather in the Adriatic Sea, advises Marcus to say where it is. He then declares that the natural features described finely illustrate the situation occupied by Titus and Marcus with respect to each other and to society. For, as the island of Aenaria repels waves and storms, and thus protects from perils and hardships an interior island, which itself receives salubrious airs and nourishes inhabitants, even so Titus supports the troubles and difficulties of the Roman Empire and at the same time holds Marcus safely in his bosom, the

associate of his dignity and glory, and the participator of all his good things. This image Marcus should use as many ways as he can when giving thanks to his father, in which it becomes him to be most copious. For he could do nothing worthier in his whole life than sing the praises of Titus Antoninus. He himself is so pleased with the image that he will suggest no other to his disciple, but rest content with giving him certain instructions for the making of similitudes. He adds that the pain in his elbow is not much allayed.[1]

The following notes apparently concern the proximate address of Marcus inaugurating his first consulate on New Year's Day :—

To My Lord.

If thou lovest us at all, sleep through these nights, that thou mayest come into the senate with a fresh colour, and read with strong lungs.

To My Master.

I shall never love thee enough : I will sleep.

[1] It is worth noting of these two letters that, while Marcus says "My lady saluteth thee," Fronto replies, "Salute the lady thy mother," which shows that the mother and not the wife of Marcus was the "lady" intended. Throughout the correspondence there are frequent greetings to and from his mother, but only two or three indisputably referable to his wife. The mother of Marcus long survived her husband. The Emperor Didius Julianus, who perished in A.D. 193 at the age of fifty-six years, was brought up in her house, and became through her influence one of the *vigintiviri* [Spart. JUL. 1, 9] who, it is said, had to have reached the age of twenty years. Even supposing that here, as elsewhere, exceptions were made, Julianus could not have attained less than fifteen years, so that his patroness must have been living in A.D. 152, and may have been living in A.D. 157 ; but a date earlier than the last seems preferable, as Julianus obtained the quaestorship before his due age. Marcus himself speaks of his mother as dying young [MED. i, 7]. M. Des Vergers says that A.D. 155 is the latest year when the name of Domitia Lucilla distinguishes the bricks, tiles, and pots which issued from the manufactures upon her estate, and that subsequently the phrase "our Caesar" marks those products [pp. 13, 14].

To My Lord.

Have pity and remove one word from the speech ; and, I pray thee, never use *dictio* for *oratio*. Farewell, my lord, my immortal glory. Salute the lady, thy mother.

Rescript.

To-morrow I will defend myself concerning that word, if thou remindest me.....(rest missing).

140[1]

This year, in company with his adoptive father, Marcus acted as Consul, but he was probably the one who afterwards retired in favour of C. Bruttius Praesens, whose name stands third on the consular list for that period.[2] The following letters are as well suited to the present time as to any other reasonably assumable, and one or two of them contain matter slightly supporting the allocation. For a beginning Marcus, in a somewhat laboured and pedantic style, salutes Fronto's birthday. He goes round to all the gods who in dreams and mysteries or by medicines and oracles have ever rendered assistance unto man, and he implores them to bless Fronto, especially with the boon of health. In reply we hear that all things go well with Fronto, since Marcus desires it, for none is worthier than he to have his petitions granted by the gods, or to receive from them what Fronto in turn solicits for him. In the next letter Fronto rejoices over the progress of Marcus, but advises him to remodel his sentences two or three times. Marcus, replying, says that he accounts himself happy to have such a teacher, not because he learns from him to make neat sentences, but because he learns from him to speak the truth ; which is a thing most

[1] III, 9–18 ; IV, 1–7. Naber gives III, 9–16 ; V, 44–53 ; IV, 8–12.

[2] Liebenham, p. 22.

difficult for gods and men, as may be known from the fact that there never was an oracle which had not something obscure whereby the imprudent were ensnared. In a long and remarkable reply Fronto says that he would have to invent words to express the joy afforded him by the charming and elegant epistles which he receives from Marcus, now occupied with such numerous and important affairs. Nevertheless, he resolves to cultivate the fault of idleness by writing less frequently, to avoid giving occasion for replies that increase the burden of Marcus, who of his own accord writes once or twice daily. The more he loves him, the more he should spare him. What is sweeter than the kiss of Marcus, than the perfume of his neck and of his mouth? Yet recently it nearly happened that he was the only one not to kiss and embrace him, while the crowd was delaying him with their kisses[1] and their salutations, when he and his father were going away, and the latter was already in the chariot. Thus in all things he will ever postpone his own advantage to the good of Marcus, and he is ready to procure him the slightest relief by the severest toil. The letters of Marcus he awaits with the joy and the anxiety of the lover who attends the coming of his

[1] The Romans were in the habit of kissing one another on every possible occasion. The custom prevailed also among the Jews; and Christianity did not abolish it. Jesus reproached Simon the Pharisee for not having kissed him (LUKE vii, 45); and Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss (*ib.* xxii, 48). Paul bids the Romans (ROM. xvi, 16), the Corinthians (I COR. xvi, 20; II COR. xiii, 12), and the Thessalonians (I THESS. v, 26) to use kissing as a mode of salutation. Sulpicius Severus (†420), describing how he chanced to meet a brother cleric, lately returned from abroad, says: "I embraced the man most lovingly; I kissed his hands and his feet." Then he proceeds to say that his friend, after professing to have come back solely from desire for him, added: *Tu modo propter quem tot maria transnavigavimus, tantum terrae transcucurrimus complectandum fruendumque te remotis omnibus trade.* (DIAL. i, 1.)

mistress over a rugged and perilous path. He detests the story of the girl whose sweetheart perished in the waves as she was guiding him with a lamp. For his part he would rather forgo all the fruit of his love than permit Marcus to suffer the least disadvantage in obtaining him pleasure. Less than two whole lines is all that remains of an epistle from Marcus which opens with a promising reference to Cicero. Afterwards, Marcus having belauded straightforward and open speech, Fronto, with great wisdom and tact, reminds him that Socrates used all sorts of oblique and concealed discourse in bringing his hearers to a knowledge of the truth, and that many who can never be instructed and reformed by plain dealing can often be benefited by the opposite treatment.

Referring to a certain speech delivered by Marcus in the Senate, Fronto says that he laid awake pondering whether excessive love might be causing him to estimate too lightly the faults of Marcus, and whether Marcus would have become more skilled in eloquence but for his sloth and carelessness. These suspicions, as might have been expected, took wings, and Fronto discovered with enthusiasm that Marcus had advanced in eloquence beyond his age, beyond the length of his studies, and beyond the hopes of his master. After this delicate compliment, Fronto gives Marcus some instruction thought of at midnight, and ends by exhorting him to persevere and by promising to bring him to the summit of oratory. This speech, as I imagine, was the one that Marcus in his official capacity had to make at the anniversary of the day whereon his adoptive father ascended the throne. Marcus, duly noting the skilful turn in Fronto's letter, declares himself blessed because accounted worthy to be praised and blamed by the greatest of orators and the best of men. It is precious to him

to be lauded, not for his merits, but because of Fronto's mere love—a point which Fronto has discussed at large and with great elegance in his previous epistle. Fronto's letters make him feel how Fronto loves him ; and his soul fears and is a little sad lest he should have uttered to-day in the Senate anything on account of which he might appear unworthy to have Fronto as his master. In another letter he mentions the benefit to be derived by him from the orations of Gracchus, and says that he does not know what Fronto will make of him in the end, since he never ceases to lead him daily into the way of truth, and, as the vulgar say, to open his eyes.

In a curious letter Fronto likens Marcus to Orpheus, who got a variety of wild beasts to forget their evil dispositions, and to follow him tamely while he sung. Marcus, says Fronto, unites his friends and followers with one another in mutual love, much more easily than any one else, because he had all the virtues by birth before he learned them by instruction ; being a "good man before puberty, and skilled in speaking before the virile toga." But what he most admires is this power of uniting together persons of such different and opposing tendencies, and of freeing them so completely from envy that none thinks himself injured by the favours which another receives. Although about to see Fronto next day, Marcus writes him quite a lengthy epistle. Among other things he says :—

> What shall I add except that I love thee deservedly? But how shall I say deservedly? For would that I could love thee according to thy deserts. And it is for this that I am often angry with thee, being absent and innocent, because thou makest that I cannot love thee as I wish ; yea, that my mind cannot follow thy love to the height thereof.

Then follows a long letter from Fronto on literary matters. He says that, although in other arts people may disguise their ignorance, they cannot do this in the art of choosing and placing words. He makes some good remarks about the older Roman authors, and gives an interesting and mostly correct estimate of Cicero; after which he expatiates upon the proper application of words having a common root, but a more or less modified sense as indicated by slight changes of orthography, and then he insists upon the use of precise terms for different but related objects, giving in both cases a number of excellent illustrations. Marcus, having departed, apparently, for the vintage, describes how much he was interested by the antiquities of Anagnia (now Anagni), a town of Latium. He inquires where Fronto is going, and says: "When thou seest the new wine fermenting in the jars remember that so the desire of thee springs up and overflows and foams within my breast." It has been well said that Marcus reproduced the literary failings of his teacher with the exaggeration of a persevering ape. The next two letters are the best in the whole collection:—

Hail, My Dearest Master.

> We are well. To-day, provided with refreshment, I studied from the ninth hour of night to the second hour of day. From the second to the third I walked in sandals gaily to and fro before my little room. Then, shod and cloaked (for such was the order), I went to salute my lord. We set out to the chase, and did mighty deeds, That boars were captured, we heard by report; for indeed there was no chance of seeing. Yet we ascended a sufficiently steep hill. Thence, after midday, we returned home—I to my note-books. Thereupon, having discarded shoes and garments, I spent two hours upon the reading-couch. I read Cato's oration concerning the goods of Pulchra, and

another in which he indicted a tribune. "Go," thou wilt say to thy boy, "march as quickly as thou canst, and bring me those orations from Apollo's library." In vain thou sendest, for those books also have followed me. It is for thee to prevail with the keeper of the Tiberian library. In that matter somewhat must be taken upon himself, the half whereof he may impart to me when I shall have arrived in the city. Now, having finished the orations, I wrote miserably a trifle that I might devote to the rural deities or to Vulcan ;[1] ἀληθῶς ἀτυχῶς σήμερον γέγραπταί μοι ; exactly the little composition of a hunter or a grape-gatherer, who make my small chamber resound with their wild cries—prose odious and tedious to an advocate. Why have I said this? Nay, rather, I have spoken the truth, for indeed my master himself is an orator. I seem to have taken cold, whether because I walked about in sandals in the morning or because I wrote badly, I know not. Certainly I am a man in general rheumy, but to-day I seem to myself slimier by far. Therefore I will pour oil upon my head and will begin to sleep, for I do not think to put a drop into the lamp to-night, so tired am I with riding and sneezing. Keep well for my sake, dearest and sweetest master, whom I venture to say that I desire more than Rome herself.

Hail, My Sweetest Master.

We are well. I slept rather longer on account of the little cold, which appears to be allayed. Then, from the eleventh hour of night to the third hour of day, partly I read out of Cato's *Agriculture* and partly I wrote—less miserably, by Hercules, than yesterday. Afterwards, when I had saluted my father, I caressed, as I might say, rather than gargled, my throat with honey-water, sucked up into the gullet and then rejected, for I believe this occurs both in Novius and elsewhere.

[1] Vulcan's Fête was celebrated August 23.

My throat having been cared for, I went to my father and stood by him while he sacrificed. Next, to afternoon luncheon.[1] What thinkest thou that I ate?—a little piece of bread, though I saw others eating voraciously, and nicely swollen with beans boiled in the pod, onions, and small fish. Then we attended to gathering grapes. We sweated freely, we shouted, and, as an author says, "We left but few high-swinging survivors of the vintage." At the sixth hour we returned home. I studied out a trifle, and that inept. Afterwards I chatted with my little mother, who was sitting on the upper side of the couch. My discourse was this: What thinkest thou my Fronto is doing? Then she: But what my Gratia? Then I: And what our little sparrow the tiny Gratia? While we were thus chatting and contending with cross questions which might love the one or the other of you the more, the disk sounded—that is, my father was announced to have gone to the bath. Then, washed, we dined in the press; not washed in the press, but washed, we dined [there], and we listened gladly to the rustic jokes. Returned thence, before turning on to my side to snore I explain my task, and give account of the day to my sweetest master, whom, if I could desire more, I would gladly become a little thinner. Keep well for my sake, Fronto, wherever thou art. Oh, my honey-sweet, my love, my pleasure. What is it to me to be with thee? I love thee absent.

In the next letter Marcus says he will not say much because he has exhausted his breath in dictating thirty epistles.

141[2]

On the anniversary of Marcus, Fronto *writes* him his felicitations, saying that he cannot leave home because

[1] This meal was taken between four and five in the afternoon.

[2] V, 54–57; I, 2, 3, 1, 4, 5. Naber gives V, 30, 31; III, 17–21; V, 54–59.

of suffering for three days from nightly colic and flux. In his reply Marcus offers good wishes for Fronto's birthday, which was evidently near his own. He feels relieved that Fronto ails nothing worse, and hopes that nature is doing for him what people often do for themselves at the vernal season. Apparently the illness extended. Fronto complains of a wretched sore throat with fever at night, and of some pain in his knee.

Marcus thinks the attack may yield to temperance, and looks for a better message ; but apparently he got worse news. In his reply he curses the fortune which keeps him from the side of Fronto when he longs to hold his hand, to cherish him in the bath, to stroke that foot of his, and to support him in walking. For his own sake, he himself implores him to use all possible temperance and abstinence to recover his lost health. In the anniversary letter Fronto had mentioned that his physicians were recommending him to take baths ; and Marcus now inquires about the departure of Fronto to "the waters," and his comfort upon the journey, begging to hear from him that his own mind may be eased. Fronto, delighted by the solicitude of Marcus, tells him : "My lady, thy mother, is sometimes wont to say jocosely that she envies me because I am so beloved by thee." He wonders why Marcus loves him so much, since he has been able to render him so little service. Nor is he desirous to trace the cause. For love that can be explained is no love at all. True love is fortuitous and free ; it serves no ends, and arises from impulse rather than from reason. Hot springs come of themselves and endure, whereas hot baths need to be prepared by fire and their heat ends with it. Even so a love occasioned by services perishes when they cease, while a spontaneous love lasts and is happy. The same applies to trees and shrubs. Those reared

in orchards and gardens never equal those that grow wild. Many altars are erected to Fortune, none to Reason. Hence, if a reason exists why Marcus loves Fronto, let it be for ever concealed, and let the origin of their love be a subject of dispute like the sources of the Nile. After this Fronto sends Marcus an essay on sleep. Thereupon Marcus defends vigils, and Fronto supports his thesis. Minerva was rather drowsy on that occasion.

142[1]

To this year perhaps are referable the following letters, the first two of which have obviously been transposed. The proper order is this. Fronto writes that he is keeping his bed, but that when Marcus (and others) go to Centumcellae[2] he will, if fit for the journey, see them at Lorium[3] on the ninth of the month,[4] the gods being favourable. He says, "Excuse me to the lord, thy father"; and adds how he loves and reveres this merciful ruler. If Marcus goes hunting wild beasts, he must remember to spur his horse; and he will not forget to take Cato's *Galba* to Centumcellae. "Farewell, lord," says Fronto, "delight thy father, salute thy mother, and long for me!" Even then he cannot end without a reference to Cato and Galba, and a final request that Marcus salute the lady his mother. The date mentioned in the above letter is very probably July 9, which immediately preceded the anniversary of the day whereon Titus Antoninus received the empire.

[1] III, 20, 19; V, 58, 59; IV, 9, 10; III, 21. Naber gives V, 40–43; I, 2, 3, 1, 4, 5.

[2] Centumcellae (now Civita Vecchia), a city on the Etrurian coast.

[3] Lorium, a place twelve miles from Rome on the Aurelian Way. [Eutrop. viii, 4.] Here Titus Antoninus was brought up, and here he built a palace where he frequently resided and where he finally expired.

[4] *vii, idus.*

In this case the excuses sent to him by Fronto through Marcus were designed to meet the contingency of Fronto's absence on that festive occasion. A letter from Fronto to Titus Antoninus, which agrees with the present circumstances, says that Fronto, who would fain embrace him on the return of the day which he esteems to be the origin of his own "prosperity, dignity, and security," is so afflicted by a grave pain in the shoulder and a still graver pain in the neck that he is scarcely able to bend down, stretch out, or turn over. He has, therefore, performed the devotions of the day at his home, and prayed that next year he may embrace him twice, and kiss him twice on the breast and on the hands in token of the two anniversaries.

Writing to Marcus, Fronto says that he is vexed at night by pain over his shoulder, his elbow, his knee, and his heel; and that even this much he could not write with his own hand. Marcus answers that the state of his mind at not having seen Fronto for such a time, and for such a cause, may well be imagined. Perhaps he will not be able to see him for some days. When Fronto is prostrate the mind of Marcus is supine. It will rise again when Fronto is established. Now it burns for him with the most ardent desire. Marcus concludes: "Farewell, life of thy Caesar, of thy friend, of thy disciple." Fronto, recalling the observation of Socrates that pain and pleasure are closely related, declares that the evil of absence is compensated by the advantage of desire;[1] for desire springs from love, and love is increased by desire. He also alludes to the epistle in which he had mentioned that the pain in his shoulder prevented him from writing with his own hand.

[1] *Desiderium.* An impassioned yearning for the absent.

A mutilated note of two lines from Marcus comes next. Then Fronto appears to have set off for Centumcellae, with disastrous results to his bodily state. For there is a letter wherein Marcus asks how he can study when Fronto is suffering, and suffering because of him. For what caused the pain that Fronto complains of in his knee? What but Centumcellae, lest it be said—Marcus himself. He adds that his judiciary duties hinder his studies. He has sent the day's exercise. Yesterday was occupied with a journey. To-day it was difficult to do anything save the evening task. Now he would sleep, for he is very sleepy, but his little room is so cold that he can hardly stretch out his hand. In another letter Marcus says that, having heard Fronto was better, and being himself occupied, he did not write him in the morning; and that he cannot bear to write him anything except with a free and easy mind. He concludes thus: "My master, behold I do not sleep; and I force myself to sleep lest thou shouldest be angry. Certainly thou esteemest that I write these lines in the evening."

143[1]

This is the only year to which a large correspondence between Marcus and Fronto is assignable with certainty. Moreover, the part furnishes special and conclusive evidence of the fact everywhere apparent, that some letters have perished and that many are wrongly placed.

The present date is certain: first, because there are numerous letters which give Fronto ceremoniously the title of Consul, while others incidentally mention his

[1] V, 12–17; I, 6, 7; II, 4–6, 10–12; I, 8 [*Graec.* 1]; II, 1–3 [*Pium.* 1, 2]; IV, 8; II, 8 [*Graec.* 2], 9, 13, 14; V, 40, 41. Naber gives V, 32, 33; II, 11, 12, 5, 6, 7; I, 6, 7; II, 1, 2; I, 8 [*Graec.* 1] [*Pium.* 1, 2]; II, 3, 4, 8 [*Graec.* 2]; II, 9, 10, 13–17 [*Amic.* I, 14, 15].

holding the consulship, or regard those with such notices; and, secondly, because Fronto was Consul during the months of July and August, 143[1], but at no other time. A reference in one of the letters bearing the consular superscription of Fronto declares that Marcus had been seriously ill at the season when his birthday occurred. This illness may have evoked the following notes; all very brief. Fronto inquires after Marcus, and says that he himself is seized with pain in the neck. Marcus has passed the night without fever, and taken food not unwillingly. He desires that the recent anxiety of Fronto about him shall be taken as the measure of his present anxiety about Fronto. The latter complains terribly of his neck, but says that a pain in his foot has ceased. Marcus condoles. "To-day," he has bathed, walked a little, and taken a little more food, but his stomach is not yet willing. The next "to-day" he has bathed, eaten sufficiently, "and even used wine gladly." This is prefaced by the remark that he neither could nor should hear with equanimity of Fronto's painful neck. Fronto replies that this suffering continues unabated, but that he is well in mind, since he has known that Marcus used the bath and wine gladly.

It would seem that for some time after this illness the health of Marcus remained delicate, and that he left Rome at the beginning of the summer for seaside resorts in the south, where he was still residing when Fronto came out of office on the first of September. A lengthy absence of this kind explains some otherwise unintelligible references to a long separation of Marcus and Fronto which occur in the correspondence between them during Fronto's consulship. The next assignable

[1] Leibenham gives "143. C. Bellicius Torquatus :: Ti. Claudius Atticus Herodes. ¶ M. Cornelius T. f. Fronto (1 Juli–31 Aug.)."

letter is one about a speech which Fronto, then Consul, had made in the Senate. Marcus quotes from this a copious and excellent passage wherein Fronto vividly portrays certain abuses in relation to the proving of testaments. The presumptive heirs of testators living in the provinces had the right of demanding that the wills concerned should not be opened on the spot, but sent under seal to Rome, to wait there till they themselves arrived. This not only exposed the wills to the risk of being lost, but also the estates to the danger of exploitation. For these often got into the hands of supposititious heirs, who made perpetual excuses for not putting in an appearance at court.

Marcus, taking leave of Fronto, terms him his most fluent, most learned, dearest, sweetest, most desired master, and best beloved friend. He adds that Horace, along with his own [Latin] teacher Pollio, is dead to him ; that Herodes takes this badly ; and that he himself would like Fronto to write Herodes a few words on the matter. Fronto, elated that so much of his oration had been copied by the hand of Marcus and the whole thereof declaimed by him to the Emperor, avows that the love of Marcus towards him is deeper than any sea, and that Marcus continually affords new proof of this affection, fearing lest the love of the past day should appear greater than the love of the present. Does Marcus believe the consulate to have brought Fronto as much joy as did those proofs of supreme love in this single instance? Who among the famous orators of antiquity ever received so great an honour? Marcus, diligent as ever, tells of the hours he has been writing, and of what a lot he has read in Cato. "With the same pen," he salutes his master, exclaiming: "How long have I not seen thee!" In another letter he mentions having heard the celebrated sophist Polemon

declaiming three days previously; and he gives the following description of the man :—

> He appeared to me a hardy rustic, with a large farm of grain and vines, the best fruits, and a plenteous return; but never a Pompeian fig, an Aricinian herb, or a Tarentine rose, never a woodland glade, a dusky grove, or an umbrageous sycamore—all for use rather than for pleasure; whatever should be praised yet cannot be loved.

He afterwards declares his intention of making "a pause" before beginning "to poetize." In an epistle addressed *Consuli Suo et Magistro*, Marcus thus describes the climatic conditions of Naples :—

> The Neapolitan climate, to be sure, is favourable, but extremely changeful. Every two or three minutes it becomes too cold, or too warm, or too rough. Sometimes, at first, half the night is warm, Laurentine; and then the cock-crowing is chilly. Other times, the night, early morning, and dawn, up to sunrise, is glacial, very like Algidum. Thereafter, in the forenoon it is sunny, Tusculan; then, midday is fervid, Puteolan. But, when the sun has advanced to the ocean side, the temperature becomes more moderate, resembling the Tiburtine. It continues thus in the evening, and in the hours of early sleep, until, as M. Porcius says, "midnight descends headlong."[1]

Earlier Marcus declares himself as far from Greek letters as his native Mount Coelius is from Greek soil.

From another letter of this period we learn that

[1] The above allusions are thus explicable. *Laurentum*, a maritime city in Latium. There Pliny junior had a fine estate. *Algidum*, now Roca de Papae, a city on the slopes of Algidus, a snow-capped mountain near Rome. *Tusculum*, now Frascati, a city of Latium. *Puteoli*, now Pozzuolo, a favourite spa on the coast of Campania, opposite Baiae. There Cicero had a country seat. *Tibur*, now Tivoli, another city of Latium, and intersected by the Arno.

Marcus would have sent some of his hexameters to Fronto, as desired, had not the scribe, knowing his lord's "distemper," omitted to pack them, lest they should go into the fire. He continues :—

> But there was little danger to these hexameters. For, as I may confide the truth to my master, I love them. I study them out at night, for the day is consumed in the theatre ; and thus I do less, tired and sleeping in the morning. Nevertheless, during these days I have made extracts in five volumes from sixty books.

Recalling that Fronto has mentioned Polemon, he says: "I ask thee not to mention Horace, who is dead to me along with Pollio." In his farewell he declares that it is two years since he saw Fronto, although some people say it is only two months, but they reckon days !

The letters describing Polemon and the climate of Naples belong to what are called the Tullian Epistles. Another of the same class described a strange tree which Marcus had observed three years before when returning with his father from the vintage ; but, alas ! only five lines now remain. A further and rather amusing specimen of the type is as follows :—

> When my father betook himself home from the vines, I mounted a horse as usual and set out on the journey, and was carried some little distance. Presently, then, at a lonely spot, many sheep were standing in the road crowded together, and also four dogs and two shepherds—nothing more. Then one of the shepherds, when he saw a good few knights approaching, said to the other : "See thee those knights, for they are wont to make great ravages." Upon hearing this, I gave spurs to my horse, and drove into the sheep. The sheep, being frightened, were scattered ; and some strayed elsewhere, wandering about and bleating. The shepherd brandished a fork, and with the fork he

> struck the horse that was carrying me. We made off. In that way the man who feared to lose his sheep lost his fork. You think it a tale? but the thing is true.

Fronto, in a long letter, mentions his late speech, and says that Aufidius Victorinus will inform Marcus how it was received. He then makes some general observations upon oratory, and refers to the age of Marcus as being twenty-two years, adding that at this time of life he himself had advanced but little in his studies. Next follows a passage about Horace and a Polemon whom he introduces; after which Fronto goes on to say that he is returning some verses that Marcus has written, taking care that they cannot be read by "that little mouse" Aufidius Victorinus, who is the bearer, and who says that Marcus recited his poetry quickly on purpose to prevent him from remembering it. He himself recalls that Marcus has often told him to show nobody his verses. Fronto then points to a gaiety in the recent epistles of Marcus, which he attributes to good health, and he forbids him ever to make them uneasy again as he did on his birthday. With this letter Fronto encloses one in Greek for the mother of Marcus, telling him first of all to correct it lest she should think the writer a boor, and then to give it her with a kiss for its more favourable reception. The missive in question still exists. Therein Fronto gracefully excuses himself for not having written to the lady sooner, assigning as the reason of his tardiness that he has been occupied with the preparation of a speech celebrating the lofty virtues of Titus Antoninus, "the great king." The speech here referred to was that which Fronto, as Consul, would be expected to make before the Senate on the anniversary of the day when the Emperor had ascended the throne. Fronto, however,

postponed the address, and Marcus, in a letter now lost, inquired the reason of the postponement. Fronto, in reply, says that he thinks it more befitting for his master to receive the public thanksgiving on the day of the great public spectacles shortly to be given at his expense. But, to speak candidly, the real cause of the delay is the wish to make the oration worthy of the theme. Fronto often lauded Hadrian with applause, but he had for him respect only ; whereas he loves and cherishes Titus Antoninus as the sun, the light, life, and breath ; and he feels himself beloved by him. Hence the oration is being prepared slowly, but it shall be delivered on the 13th of August. Meanwhile, if Marcus wishes to divert himself, he may kiss and embrace his father, and then belaud him.

Marcus declares with rapture that Fronto deserves the crown of love, and that the herald will proclaim him victor in the contest of friendship. In his love to Marcus, Fronto excels all love of man to man, while Marcus, although inferior to him in strength of affection, nevertheless loves him more than any man loves him—yea, more than Fronto loves himself. Even in rivalry with Gratia, Marcus fears to win. The letters of his mother are not so delightful and mellifluous as the epistles of Fronto. In eloquence these surpass the efforts of all that breathe ; but, if they did not, it would still be impossible for him to describe the joy, yearning, and affection inspired by their mere sentiments. The last one affected him so much that he read it to his father, who listened with admiration, and agreed in applauding the reasons assigned for the delay of Fronto's speech. When at last a copy of this lucubration arrived the enthusiasm of Marcus knew no bounds. If Titus Antoninus could be sufficiently praised, it would be by Fronto. It were easier to imitate Phidias or Apelles,

or Demosthenes himself, or Cato himself, "than this so accomplished and elaborate work." Oh that Marcus could have kissed the head of Fronto as he made each of his heads! Hereafter, they will all study vainly, labour vainly, and strain their sinews for naught.

In the above letter Marcus says that he is about to send one written by his lord. This has survived; and therein, replying to a brief and mutilated epistle from Fronto, which is also extant, Titus Antoninus expresses astonishment at the ingenuity of Fronto on such a trite and familiar theme, adding delicately that he cannot say less without defrauding him of just praise, although he fears to be insolently praising his own praises. He mentions gratefully a reference to his deceased wife Galeria Faustina, and swears: "I would rather be living with her on Gyaros than without her in the palace." Somewhat later Fronto accounts his brother happy because he will see Marcus in two days. As for himself, he sticks to Rome, being bound with golden fetters, but he awaits the first of September as the superstitious await the rising of a star to break their fast. Marcus replies that Fronto's brother has announced Fronto's coming, and he protests by Hercules that he wishes Fronto may come, provided it be with his safety, for he hopes that the sight of him will benefit his own health. Some one, he thinks it is Euripides, has said: "It is sweet for the eye to behold the kindly light." His present state can easily be known by his precarious handwriting; but his strength begins to return; there is no remaining pain of the breast; and the ulcer in the throat has been desiccated. All is being done as regards remedies and vigilance.[1] Indeed, Marcus feels that the only thing

[1] Ulcus autem illud ΑΠΕΡΓΑΝΕΤΑΙ *τῆς ἀρτηρίας*. The reading of the verb is corrupt. Naber conjectures *ἀπεξήρανται*. *Autem* has the sense of *also*.

which makes "the daily incommodities tolerable" is the consciousness of obeying the physicians in the matter of temperance and of diligent care. Besides, it would be disgraceful for the pravity of the body to hold out longer than the application of the mind to recover health. Fronto somewhat later writes as follows :—

To My Lord.

I have sent my Gratia to celebrate the birthday of thy mother, and have bidden her remain there until I come. The very moment that I abjure the consulate I will ascend the vehicle and fly to thee. Meanwhile I have promised my Gratia on my faith that there will be no danger from hunger. For thy mother will share with her client the morsels sent by thee to her. Nor is my Gratia what the wives of advocates are said to be, greedy; she will even be content with the mere kisses of thy mother. But what will become of me? There is no kiss left at Rome! All my fortunes and all my joys are at Naples.

He then asks how to abjure his office, and what reason to give for the abjuration, adding :—

I shall, however, swear that I have long been wishing to get away from the consulate in order to embrace M. Aurelius.

Fronto also wrote in Greek to the mother of Marcus, saying that he had sent Gratia to felicitate her upon her birthday, and how delighted he would have been to bring the felicitations himself, but, alas! "a few last days of authority" detained him at Rome. There are many graceful nothings and much tactful flattery in the letter. Fronto was a very suitable man to compose epistles for the delectation of the fair sex, as he had the art of writing agreeably without saying anything of importance. Two lines of an unfinished letter are all

that remain of the thanks which Marcus gave to Fronto for having sent Gratia on that mission. The happy reunion now approached. "Day after to-morrow," writes Marcus, "will be my festival if indeed thou comest.....Do but come to-morrow, and let happen what will." Again :—

To His Master.

> When I am away from thee, thou readest Cato ; when thou art away from me, I hear cases up to the eleventh hour. Truly I may wish the following night to be the shortest. It matters the less to stay up, as I shall see thee the sooner. Farewell, Oh my sweetest master. My mother salutes thee. I have hardly breath ; I am so tired.

It is possible that Fronto was prevented by a severe attack of cholera from arriving at the expected time. There is a letter where he mentions having just had such an attack, and where he describes the symptoms with great power. At the end he says :—

> For whole days I did not recover my voice. But now, the gods assisting, I improve rapidly. I walk with greater ease, and call out more clearly ; and in fine, if the gods help, I design to be carried to-morrow in a vehicle. If I bear the paving-stones easily, I will run to thee as fast as possible. I shall live then, when I see thee. On the 25th of this month[1] [September?] I may set out, if the gods help. Farewell, sweetest, best beloved lord, the chiefest cause of my life. Salute thy mother.

Marcus replies that he has long been desiring to see Fronto, and that Fronto may imagine the consternation occasioned by his letters. He thanks the gods for Fronto's escape. By their help he still has him, and in a few days he will see him.

[1] *Ad vii Kal.*

144[1]

The consuls upon their designation nominated to the Senate certain provinces as eligible respectively for proconsular or praetorian goverment, and when this nomination was accepted they with the praetors divided the chosen districts among themselves by casting lots. Afterwards, during their term as consuls, their territory, troops, and pay were delimited and warranted by decrees of the Senate. The ordinary consuls, and doubtless the substitutes, assumed proconsular duties at the end of the consular year. The rich province of Asia having gone to Fronto by sortition, he appears to have departed thither to make arrangements for his future administration. Later, Marcus recommends to Fronto a person who may call upon him in the province, and says that, although with him justice and equity are safe for all the Asiatics, yet he would like him to help the man in every way that the proconsular office innocently permits. Fronto in turn solicits the favours of Marcus for another protégé, and asks him to remember the man's name in case he does not know him by sight. It would seem that Fronto returned to Italy in bad health, and landed at Caieta, probably for a brief rest. From a lost letter, the index preserves the words : " I have halted at Caieta." The next letter on the list is from Marcus. Here the commencement is wanting, but the writer says it would be better for Fronto to save the journey, the illness being recent, and to await them at Caieta. Near the end he quotes from a poet the words, " Even the smoke of the fatherland," which appears to be an allusion to the joy of getting back from abroad. There is also a letter in

[1] V, 36, 37, 5, 6, 20, 21 [*Pium.* 8], 22, 23, 26–29, 38, 39. Naber gives V, 34–39 ; IV, 1–7 ; V, 5–21 [*Pium.* 5, 6, 8] ; V, 22–29 ; IV, 13.

which Fronto says: "Make known my infirmity to thy father. Thinkest thou I should also write him? Write me." Marcus answers: "Forthwith, my master, will I show my lord the necessity of thy repose. Farewell, my best and sweetest master." In his letter to Titus Antoninus, Fronto mentions the preparations he had made for administering the province, and especially the number of friends that he had called to help him from various parts of the empire. He thus continues:—

> All this I did, relying upon the hope that I could, by taking little food and drinking water, if not entirely end the ill health which hinders me, yet certainly mitigate its force during a greater interval. Thus it came to pass that I was well longer than usual and felt strong, so much so that I conducted before thee on behalf of friends two actions of no little difficulty. Then the infirmity burst forth with a violence that showed me all the hope had been in vain.

The rest is lost. It is probable that the office was not at liberty till near the time when Fronto, to whom it had fallen by lot, renounced it, and that the visit which he paid to the province was occupied in making the arrangements referred to in this letter. The resignation of Fronto probably occurred early in the year, and it would seem that, not long after coming back to Italy, he resumed his tutorial duties. At this period it may have been that he set Marcus certain exercises of a type much approved by contemporary teachers of rhetoric—I mean the picturesque and dramatic relation of historical or pseudo-historical episodes. One of these was as follows:—At the festival of Minerva, a Roman consul, laying aside his gown, put on the gauntlets, and, in the company of the young men, smote a lion. For this he was called up by the censor. Marcus, on receiving these details, wishes to know more

of the incident. When was it? Did it happen at Rome? Surely it did not occur at Albanum under Domitian? The subject needs careful treatment to make it credible and to excite indignation. Later Marcus says he had written something, but the scribe was not there to copy it. The thing is not to his wish, for he hurried over it ; and, besides this, the ill health of Fronto was a discouragement. He desires the name of the tribune branded by Acilius the censor. Fronto replies that he writes with some delay, having opened the little book from Marcus rather late, because he had had to plead in the forum. Lucilius, tribune of the people, was branded by the censors for having cast into prison a free Roman citizen whom his colleagues had ordered to be discharged. Marcus, who will have a whole day at liberty, begs that Fronto, if he has ever loved him, will then supply him with "copious material." He would like a clamorous theme! Fronto says that he will see Marcus the day after to-morrow, as he himself is still infirm from his elbow and his neck. He tells him to bear it when he demands from him excessive and arduous things. He has convinced himself of being able to effect as much as Marcus shall strive for, and he does not refuse to be hated if Marcus fails to perform as much as he himself demands from him, provided only that Marcus applies courage and zeal, as indeed he is doing. On December 15 in this year Lucius, the other adopted son of Titus Antoninus, reached his fourteenth birthday, and he would be likely to receive the manly robe on that occasion. The following letters probably refer to the above investment, whether it took place then or subsequently. Fronto praises a certain deed and a certain speech as equally noble, and comments upon the readiness of Lucius, who, as he opines, had had little time to prepare his response. Marcus answers that he

got this letter on returning from the feast, and will write at large in the evening so that Fronto may have the news next day. He says his brother's reply was all the more laudable for having been prepared as Fronto conjectured. Here it should be remembered that both Marcus and Lucius were Fronto's scholars, which accounts for his pride over the success of Lucius at the time in question.

146[1]

A letter certainly written during this period still survives. Therein Marcus, who was born on April 26, A.D. 121, says that he has attained the age of twenty-five years. By a curious slip Naber in his *Prolegomena* assigns the missive to A.D. 145, while in his *Index Epistularum* he puts it under A.D. 144. Moreover, he regards it as the last letter of the present set, because he thinks that Marcus, having tired of Fronto's trifling instructions, sent it him to announce his intention of abandoning rhetoric for philosophy. This reasoning is quite vain if the marriage of Marcus took place in A.D. 146, for the set contains various letters referring to his wife and children.

But, apart from this, the letter itself does not warrant any such inferences. There, after relating a story about Aufidius, he goes on to say that the coming of Fronto gives him both joy and anxiety. The cause of the first needs no explanation, while that of the second he will duly confess. Although having leisure, he has worked but little upon the task which Fronto gave him to perform. The works of Aristo[2] have occasioned this neglect. They arrest and engross his attention by their importance, and make him feel sad and vexed at himself

[1] IV, 13.

[2] Probably Aristo of Chios, disciple of Zeno, and founder of a short-lived sect of sceptical Stoics. (Diog. Laert. and Bayle).

to think that he has reached the age of twenty-five years without acquiring a knowledge of philosophic principles. Still, as the Athenian orator told his audience that the laws might sometimes be permitted to sleep, Marcus, after propitiating the lucubrations of Aristo, will turn now and again to literature. But Aristo will never so sleep as to let him be altogether taken up with it. There is good reason to suppose with Naber that this decision to pursue philosophy more than rhetoric was due to the efforts of Rusticus the Stoic. If Fronto was the teacher for whom Marcus entertained the greatest affection, Rusticus was the one in whom he placed the most confidence. He revered him and followed him, taking his advice both in public and private affairs, and allowing him to attain immense influence both in domestic and military policy. He made him a second time consul, and used to kiss him before kissing the prefects. He also demanded for him from the Senate the honour of statues upon his death.[1] In his *Meditations* he says :—

> From Rusticus I received the impression that my character required improvement and discipline, and from him I learned.....to abstain from rhetoric and poetry and fine writing.....and to write my letters with simplicity, like the letter which Rusticus wrote from Sinuessa to my mother..... and I am indebted to him for being acquainted with the courses of Epictetus, which he communicated to me out of his collection. (i, 7.)

147[2]

Marcus commemorates the birthday of Fronto, now re-established. He conveys his mother's salutation and bids him give Gratia a kiss. Fronto replies that every

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 3. [2] V, 32, 33, 6–11, 44–51, 24, 25, 52, 53,

thing he can wish for himself is contained in the prosperity of Marcus, and that he is well and happy because Marcus is "so dear to his father, so sweet to his mother, so sacred to his wife, and so good and kind to his brother." It is this that makes Fronto, in spite of his health, still desire to live. Apart therefrom he has had enough and above of years, labours, art, and glory; and something more than enough and above of pains and sicknesses. He gave his daughter the kiss, and never did she appear so sweet to him as when thus kissed. "Salute the lady, sweetest Lord. Farewell, and offer a kiss to thy matron." Here the mother and the wife of Marcus are clearly distinguished, and light is again thrown upon the meaning of the oft-repeated *Dominam saluta* or *Domina te salutat.*

As the anniversary of Fronto was near that of Marcus, these letters must have been exchanged about the end of April. In a certain letter wherein Fronto complains of his violent suffering he says to Marcus: "I hear that thy Augusta is grievously afflicted. Verily I commend her to the gods." Marcus replies that the letter has made him ill, and that he can neither dine, sleep, nor study. He adds that Fronto has at least the solace of his oration, but fears that he may reach Lorium somewhat late. Of Faustina he reports nothing. Then come a few letters worth preservation:—

To My Master.

I have passed these days badly. My sister was so suddenly taken with the pains of childbirth that I saw the horrible sight. My mother, imprudent in the trepidation, struck her side against a corner of the wall, and with the blow gravely afflicted both herself and us. I myself, when about to recline at table, came upon a scorpion in the couch; but I managed to kill it before I had got laid down on top. If thou art keeping better it is a comfort,

My mother, the gods assisting, is already easier. Farewell, my best, sweetest master. My lady salutes thee.

To My Lord.

Since the gods have preserved thee safe and sound, I give them thanks. Remembering thy principles, I am certain thou wast unperturbed. I, though you sages may laugh at me, was indeed consternated. Farewell, sweetest lord, and be thou a charge for the gods. Salute the lady.

To My Lord.

Just now Victorinus tells me thy lady is more feverish than she was yesterday. Gratia had brought better news. On this account I did not see thee, for I was weak from a cold. To-morrow, however, in the morning, I will come to the house unto thee. There, if it be suitable, I will also visit the lady.

To My Master.

To-day likewise Faustina is feverish, and, indeed, I seem to myself to perceive it more clearly to-day than yesterday. But, the gods assisting, she makes me feel calmer, because she adapts herself so obediently to our wishes. That you are able to come, and that you promise to come, delights me, my master. Farewell, my most winsome master.

By the carelessness of his bearers, Fronto got bruised and burned at the bath. He says that the physicians order him to keep his bed. Victorinus will plead at court in his stead. Marcus replies that his troubles are increased by Fronto. He says: "The infirmity of the lady my mother does not suffer me to rest. To this is added the approach of Faustina's delivery. But we should trust in the gods."

The day on which Fronto had intended to leave the house he was detained there by pain in his knee.

Marcus declares that Fronto's letters show how great are his sufferings. He himself dictates his reply while walking to and fro, as his health demands this exercise. He will feel the full charm of the vintage when Fronto's health improves. Pain in the soles of Fronto's feet, and afterwards in his groin, prevents his re-establishment, and excites the solicitude of his lord. Subsequently Marcus hopes that Fronto may spend a happy vintage with a perfectly sound body. Messengers from his "Domnula" cheer him by reporting that, with the assistance of the gods, things are more favourable.

Fronto replies that he is doing the vintage in his gardens; that except for pain in the toes of his left foot he is well enough, and that he prays the gods for Faustina every morning.

After so many plaints it is good to hear a cry of joy :–

To My Lord.

> Ten times as much do I love thee. I have seen thy child. I seem to myself to have seen thee and Faustina together as infants, so much excellence from the face of each is mingled there. Ten times as much do I love thee, sweetest lord. Salute the lady.

To My Master.

> We love Gratia, because she is like thee, so we easily understand how attractive for thee is the resemblance of our little girl to each of us; it is very pleasing to me that thou hast seen her. Farewell, my best of masters.

Marcus was then away for the vintage. The "we" and the "our," in contrast with the "me," imply that Faustina was with him. Probably the child had been left behind in charge of a wet-nurse, to let its mother recover strength.

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Being still infirm and fearing the presence of the crowd, Fronto *writes* his New Year's greetings to Marcus, and to the father, mother, wife, and daughter of Marcus; adding that he hopes to come "day after to-morrow." Marcus in his reply declares that, by avoiding the throng, Fronto has consulted for him as well as for himself, and that the day named will be quiet. He adds that his mother salutes Fronto. There are two interesting letters referable to this period :–

Caesar to Fronto.

> Thanks to the gods, we seem to obtain hope of safety. The flux has stopped, and the little fevers are driven away. Nevertheless, a very slight meagreness and something of the little cough still remain. Certainly thou knowest that I write thee these things about our tiny Faustina, for whom we have been enough concerned. Let me know, my master, whether Health, in accordance with my vow, devotes herself to thee.

In his reply, Fronto describes the consternation given him by the opening of these lines, and his relief upon finding that Marcus was not the sufferer. If Marcus should ask why his supposed suffering occasioned more grief than the real suffering of his daughter, Fronto can only say that there was the illusion of relief such as a man gets by changing shoulders in carrying a burden. Having given this serious proof of affection, Fronto proposes to give others in a lighter vein. When he sees Marcus in dreams, it is always to kiss and embrace him; and at such times he either weeps copiously or exults with joy and pleasure. Now and then the fancy takes him to abuse Marcus in the company of a few very

[1] V, 30, 51; IV, 11, 12.

intimate friends ; then, if any one joins in the abuse, he cannot bear it—just as he would give his little daughter Gratia a smack, but could not bear to see any one else do it. Again, he never sees an image of Marcus, no matter where it is, or how poor it may be, but his mouth instantly forms the motion of a kiss.[1] The little girl must not be told that he loves her father more than her. "Lest," he adds, "being moved thereat, she, as a grave, old-fashioned lady, may, when I demand to kiss her hands and feet, draw them away in anger, or stretch them out unwillingly ; and then by the gods I will kiss those tiny hands and chubby feet even more gladly than thy royal neck or thy honest, facetious mouth."

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It would appear that in the autumn of the previous year another daughter had been born to Marcus, near the return of the first one's birthday. Fronto, unable to be present at the twofold anniversary, expresses the wish that Marcus may celebrate many thereof, surrounded by prosperity, esteem, and affection. This is the day on which he would most have liked to embrace him ; but feet must be considered, especially if they refuse to walk. He thinks of taking the waters, and will report his decision. After telling Marcus to bring Faustina his congratulations, he adds : "Kiss our matrons [the two little girls] in my name, but, as I am wont, both on the feet and hands." Marcus answers that he knows Fronto would have come if he could have walked even with difficulty ; but he will come often, and they shall celebrate all their feasts, if the gods permit.

It is impossible to suggest particular dates for the

[1] The Romans saluted the statues of the gods in this manner (Min. Felix, 2).

[2] V, 42, 43, 18, 19, 34, 35 ; IV, 16, 17. [*Amic.* I, 14, 15.]

remaining letters, but they certainly belong to the space of ten or twelve years, during which Marcus was still only heir presumptive to the throne ; and probably they are referable to the earlier half of that period. In one of them Fronto complains of severe pain in the groin. Marcus, knowing how much Fronto is wont to suffer from this evil, expresses great solicitude, but he hopes the pain may yield to remedies. "We are," he adds, "still experiencing summer heats ; but, since our little girls, it may be said, are well, we esteem ourselves to be enjoying pure salubrity and a vernal temperature."

In another letter Fronto asks Marcus to use his influence with the Emperor on behalf of one Saenius Pompeianus, for whom he has appeared legally at various times, and from whom his family has received assistance in several cases. Marcus replies that Pompeianus has deserved well of him by the services which he has rendered to Fronto, and that he himself desires to oblige him through the indulgence of his father. He adds that Fronto's wishes are his delight, and concludes by saying : "Faustina and our little girls salute thee."

An affair of interest to the family of Marcus now occurred. Matidia, sister of Sabina, the wife of Hadrian (and therefore adoptive grandmother of Faustina), had bequeathed to the daughters of the latter a string of pearls and some other valuable jewels ; but the legality of the bequest was contested, and Marcus seems to have been disposed to waive his daughters' claim. On this subject there is a letter from Fronto to Marcus, one from him in reply, and another from Fronto to Victorinus, his future son-in-law. The opening of the first letter contains a reference to many complaints having been made about property withdrawn under the Falcidian Law, and then it immediately proceeds to speak of the contested jewellery. Hence it looks as though this dispute

were connected with that law. The *Lex Falcidia* enjoined that not more than three-fourths of a patrimony should be left to any but the nearest heir, so that he might have the fourth part intact.[1] Hence, if the case in question came under this statute, Matidia must have had a nearer heir than the daughters of Marcus, and the jewellery bequeathed to them must have exceeded three-fourths of her belongings. Upon the other hand, however, Fronto, in his letter to Victorinus, says :—

> When Matidia was lying senseless, some busy and turbulent men (*navi scilicet et strenui viri*) dared to attest codicils which she had already removed long ago. They also dared to protect and defend those codicils before our lord, as being justly and rightly made.

This suggests that Matidia, after bequeathing her jewels to the daughters of Faustina, made, but did not execute, certain codicils, annulling or restricting the above bequest ; that, subsequently returning to her original intention, she removed, but did not destroy, those codicils ; and that, when she was unconscious on her death-bed, they fell into the hands of persons who, by fraudulent means, adapted them to frustrate her final design. These accounts, though different, are not opposed. For the contestors of the will may have had two strings to their bow—the manipulated codicils and the Falcidian Law. With the codicils they would make out a disposition in their favour ; and, if this effort failed, they would attempt to prove that the value of the articles bequeathed away from them exceeded the limit assigned by the *Lex Falcidia*. The arguments which Fronto uses in persuading Marcus to defend the suit

[1] *Lex Falcidia jubet, non plus quam dodrantem totius patrimonii legari, ut omnimodo quadrans integer apud heredem remaneat.* Ulpian, *Tit.* 24 ; *De Legatis*, 30.

are amusing. He asks, Who will buy the jewellery? If Faustina buys it, people will say that she got it at a price disadvantageous to the heirs. Whose swoln crop is it that Marcus will adorn by despoiling his children's necks of those pearls? Till now he has shown himself a just judge—will he begin to be otherwise against his wife's interest? In that case he would resemble the fire that lights those at a distance and burns those near at hand. Fronto enclosed a copy of this letter with the one that he sent to Victorinus, observing: "I was not without fear lest philosophy should persuade something perverse." But the fear was groundless, for he convinced Marcus, who in reply asks him to plead the cause, and says he will show the oration to Faustina, giving her thanks because the affair brought him such a letter.

Chapter VI

POLICY AND CHARACTER OF TITUS ANTONINUS

Upon his marriage Marcus received from the Emperor the tribunitian power.[1] The *tribuni plebis*—or tribunes of the people, as they were called, to distinguish them from others of inferior order—were originally appointed to guard the democracy against the aristocracy. In the beginning there were two, then five, and afterwards ten. The office, like the consulate, was annual; and the election took place on December 10. Their jurisdiction was within the city walls, which they were not permitted to leave except at the Latin Fêtes. Their houses were always open to those with complaints to make or wrongs to be redressed. No pompous honours were paid to them, but their persons were held sacred, and specially protected from injury. Although the tribunes were sometimes corrupted with money, and sometimes overcome by force, yet, nevertheless, they attained great power. Their veto sufficed to annul the decrees of the Senate. The magistrates and even the consuls were at their mercy. Only a dictator was their superior, and, unlike all other functionaries, they subsisted even under his rule. Hence the tribuneship, though at first somewhat despised, became at last so much esteemed that, in order to obtain it, patricians divested themselves of their rank. Upon the end of the Republic, however, the office lost all its value. The

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 6.

Emperor Augustus desired every kind of dominion ; and since, because of his social status, he could not pose as a tribune of the people, he got himself invested with the tribunitian power. This, as well as the consular power, he artfully contrived to obtain from a popular assembly. In the next reign, probably by his advice, such assemblies were abolished. The Senate alone remained. Thenceforth tribunitian power became a mark of actual and prospective emperors, while the tribunes themselves retained it only in name.

Besides this honour, Marcus received proconsular authority outside the city, and the imperial prerogative of making communications to the Senate without being consul.[1] This was qualified by the number permitted to be introduced at one sitting, which varied in the course of time, but which was five at that day. Here it is of importance to note that Titus bestowed upon Marcus far higher honours than upon Lucius, although he survived to see him attain an age much greater than that attained by Marcus before his reception of these privileges. For, during the reign of Titus, Lucius did not receive either the Caesarship or the tribunitian power; and, whereas the sons of emperors in virtue of their rank entered the Senate, he, although called the son of Augustus, did not enter it before obtaining the right by receiving the office of quaestor. Besides this, on journeys taken in chariots, Marcus rode with the Emperor, but Lucius with the commander of the royal guard. Evidently these distinctions were made to let the people see that both actually and prospectively the situation of Marcus was superior to that of Lucius. But the difference made between them must be referred to judgment and not to partiality, for Titus, who was justice and

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 6.

humanity in the flesh, is said to have been fond of Lucius, and to have bid him imitate Marcus.[1] As regards the latter, the modesty which he had shown when receiving distinctions under Hadrian he continued to display when enjoying still higher privileges under Titus. Although young and a Caesar, he treated his adoptive father with submissiveness, and the civic heads with humility. Before leaving his apartments in the morning to pay his respects to the Emperor, he would receive callers in his bedroom in the dress of a private person. Whenever he went out, except in the Emperor's company, he always wore a dark wrap, and he never let a torch-bearer go before him simply for his own convenience. He would also frequent the forum like other people.[2] The Emperor regarded him with ever-increasing affection, and trusted him so fully that he would not promote any one without consulting him.[3] Their intimacy could not have been closer, for during the twenty-three years that Titus reigned Marcus was ever near him, except on two nights, not even consecutive.[4] He was with him in the city, and accompanied him into the country, where they spent many a pleasant sojourn, as Titus loved rural pursuits, especially the busy scenes of the vintage. This protection could not but excite envy, and the jealous vainly sought by whispered insinuations to discredit Marcus with his father. One of them, having observed Lucilla praying in her garden before the image of Apollo, suggested to Titus that she had been asking the god to hasten him out of the world to make way for her son.[5] This backbiter was Valerius Omulus, who took such liberties with his good-natured master that on one occasion, when Titus asked him whence he had the handsome columns in his garden, he

[1] Cap. VER. 3. [2] Dio, lxxi, 35. [3] Cap. M. ANT. 6.
[4] *Ib.* 7. [5] Cap. M. ANT. 6.

replied: "When thou comest into another's house, be thou deaf and dumb."[1] There is more in this than might at first appear, for the wealthy Romans used to decorate their houses with the spoils of conquered and exploited provinces.

I do not propose to write the history of Titus Antoninus, but it is necessary to say something about him, because Marcus Aurelius took him for his model, as he himself says, and as every one may see who compares their conduct both in public and in private life. Titus Antoninus had no serious wars. There were risings in Britain, Germany, Dacia, Judaea, Achaia, and Egypt, with incursions of the Moors and the Alanians; but all these his generals easily suppressed.[2] The disturbances recorded were premonitory of the terrible outburst that occurred under his successor, and resembled the weird signs said to precede earthquakes. But, although Titus Antoninus did not render himself famous by any warlike exploits, he gained by his statesmanship an influence which maintained the dignity of his empire without bloodshed. With Eastern monarchs he transacted diplomatically many important affairs, sometimes as a defender of the Roman interest, and sometimes as a simple arbitrator. He greatly preferred this method to the sword, and used often to repeat the words of Scipio: "I would rather save one citizen than slay a thousand foes."[3] In maintaining domestic order he was extremely humane. Two men conspired against him at different times. One was executed by the Senate, and the other committed suicide. Titus pardoned and assisted the son of the first conspirator; and, in the case of the second, forbade inquiry on the graceful pretence that he did not wish to know how much he

[1] Cap. Ant. P. 11. [2] *Ib.* 5.
[3] Cap. Ant. P. 9; Eutrop. viii, 4; Vic. Epit. 15.

was hated.[1] The name Pius, which he received, is said to have been given him for his clemency.[2] He attended in detail to the affairs of state, examining the provincial budgets like an accountant.[3] He greatly improved the laws, using to this end the advice of many famous jurists.[4] He enacted all his measures constitutionally, paying every honour to the Senate.[5] Upon the other hand, he abolished sinecures, and was ever ready to hear complaints against unjust authorities.[6] With respect to public works, he raised temples and other edifices at Rome, made the harbour of Caieta, and restored that of Tarracina; and also granted various towns subsidies for local improvements.[7] He forbade the burial of the dead in cities, and made provisions against vehicular accidents.[8]

He was a great patron of learning, and gathered its votaries from all parts to enrich the culture of his people.[9] He abhorred excessive taxation, and even avoided travelling in state to spare the provinces the cost of his entertainment.[10] He considerably impaired his private fortune by acts of generosity.[11] In a dearth he bought wine, oil, and corn for public distribution.[12] He gave the populace magnificent spectacles.[13] He assisted indigent magistrates and senators to support their rank.[14] In private life Titus Antoninus displayed refined tastes and simple habits.[15] He might, it is true, be reproached with indulging certain weaknesses of the flesh,[16] but there is the best possible evidence to prove that he corrected

[1] Cap. Ant. P. 7; Vic. Epit. 15.
[2] Eutrop. viii, 4; Gal. Avid. Cas. 11.
[3] Cap. Ant. P. 7.
[4] *Ib.* 12; Umedius Verus, Salvius Valens, Volusius Metianus, Ulpius Marcellus, and Sabolinus are named.
[5] Cap. Ant. P. 6.
[6] *Ib.* 7.
[7] *Ib.* 8.
[8] *Ib.* 12.
[9] Cap. Ant. P. 11.
[10] *Ib.* 7.
[11] Eutrop. viii, 4.
[12] Cap. Ant. P. 8.
[13] *Ib.* 10.
[14] *Ib.* 8.
[15] *Ib.* 6, 11.
[16] Julian, Caesares.

his graver excesses in these matters before time could have saved him the trouble.[1] He had the robust sense and the kindly disposition that mild voluptuaries often exhibit. Once, when he heard the courtiers attempt to deter Marcus from weeping over the death of one of his teachers, he exclaimed: "Let him be a human being, for neither philosophy nor dominion removes the affections."[2] On another occasion, when, in a time of scarcity, the mob grazed him with stones, he preferred to furnish relief rather than to seek vengeance.[3] His affability and familiarity were delightful. He was at home to everybody; and his friends would find him in negligent attire busied on household affairs.[4] His distractions were the theatre, hunting, fishing, walking, and friendly conversation.[5] If he had not had his son as a rival, he might have passed for the best of men![6] As to the comparison between the two, it should be noted that the great and almost continuous difficulties of his reign gave Marcus frequent opportunity to display qualities which Titus never had a chance of displaying. These must, therefore, be left out of account in comparing their characters. As regards the virtues which Titus and Marcus had in common, it almost seems as if those of Titus were more spontaneous, and those of Marcus more deliberate, and as if, on this account, there is a certain grace in the goodness of Titus which is less conspicuous in that of Marcus. It is clear that he possessed the graver disposition, and that he tried his conduct habitually by the standard of reason with a view to its improvement. Of course, as concerns the government of the appetites, Marcus had the pre-eminence; but, then, he was a pro-

[1] MED. i, 16. [2] Cap. ANT. P. 10. [3] Vic. EPIT.
[4] Cap. ANT. P. 6. [5] *Ib.* 12.
[6] "Antoninus Pius seems to have been as good as human nature royalized can be." Horace Walpole [March 4, 1759] to Robertson, author of CHARLES V; see Robertson's WORKS, Paris, 1831, p. ix.

fessed sage. For the rest, with respect to Marcus, it is to be hoped that the reader will be able to form an opinion if he perseveres to the end of this study ; while, in regard to Titus, Marcus himself has provided the best possible material for a judgment. In his *Meditations* he writes thus, addressing himself :—

> Do everything as a disciple of Antoninus. Remember his constancy in every act which was conformable to reason, and his evenness in all things, and his piety, and the serenity of his countenance, and his sweetness, and his disregard of empty fame, and his efforts to understand things, and how he would never let anything pass without having first most carefully examined it and clearly understood it ; and how he bore with those who blamed him unjustly without blaming them in return ; and how he did nothing in a hurry ; and how he listened not to calumnies ; and how exact an examiner of manners and actions he was ; and not given to reproach people, nor timid, nor suspicious, nor a sophist ; and with how little he was satisfied, such as lodging, bed, dress, food, servants ; and how laborious and patient ; and how he was able on account of his sparing diet to hold out to the evening, not even requiring to relieve himself by any evacuations except at the usual hour ; and his firmness and uniformity in his friendships ; and how he tolerated freedom of speech in those who opposed his opinions ; and the pleasure that he had when any man showed him anything better ; and how religious he was without superstition. Imitate all this that thou mayest have as good a conscience when thy last hour comes as he had. (vi, 30.)

There is a longer and still more remarkable passage (i, 16), to which I refer the reader. After an illness of three days, occasioned by eating freely of an Alpine cheese, Titus Antoninus died at Lorium on March 7, 161, in the twenty-fourth year of his reign and the

seventy-fifth of his life. Shortly before his death, having summoned his friends and the prefects, he commended the empire and his daughter to Marcus Aurelius. Next he ordered that a golden image of Fortune standing in his bedroom, and symbolizing the imperial rank, should be taken into the bedroom of Marcus. Then he gave his military tribune the watch-word, *Aequanimitas*, turned over, as to sleep, and breathed his last.[1]

[1] Cap. ANT. P. 12; M. ANT. 7. Hadrian died July 10, A.D. 138; Pius died March 7, A.D. 161. Hence the latter was in the twenty-fourth year of his reign. Eutropius has *imperii* [*anno*] *xxiii*; Victor (CAES.) *annis quibus publice egit viginti*; and (EPIT.) *Post tres atque viginti annos imperii consumptus est.* From the twelfth consulate of Domitian, when, according to Capitolinus, Pius was born, to his death in 161, there expired, according to M. Valton, seventy-four years. Eutropius has *anno vitae lxxiii*, and Victor (CAES.) *Post quintum et septuagissimum annum.* Capitolinus, however, gives *anno septuagissimo*; but his calculations are often defective. Liebenham puts the birth of Pius on September 19, A.D. 86, and his death on March 7, A.D. 161.

Chapter VII

ACCESSION OF MARCUS AND PARTHIAN WAR

Upon the death of Titus Antoninus, Marcus Aurelius was "compelled" by the Senate to take control of the State. In this transaction Lucius Commodus, the other adoptive son of the late Emperor, was completely ignored. Marcus, however, elevated him at once to the imperial rank on terms of strict equality, granting him the titles of Caesar and Augustus, with proconsular and tribunitian powers. Moreover, he betrothed him to his daughter Lucilla, then probably too young for marriage, and gave him his own name Verus, with the supplement Antoninus, which he himself assumed.[1] The conditions under which

[1] Accession et cetera, Cap. M. Ant. 7. There is some mystery as to how Lucius came to be called Verus. Dio says: "Marcus Antoninus was no sooner in possession of authority by the death of his adoptive father, Antoninus, than he associated in the dominion Lucius Verus, son of Lucius Commodus" (lxxi, 1). Capitolinus says that Lucius had the names Verus and Antoninus from his connection with [Marcus] Antoninus (Ver. 1), and that Marcus transferred his own name Verus to Lucius, who was before named Commodus (*ib.* 4). Elsewhere he declares that Marcus designated his colleague Lucius Aurelius Verus Commodus, and a few lines further on he adds that Lucius was called Verus by Marcus (M. Ant. 7). Nevertheless, Spartian, after giving the father of Lucius the name Cejonius Commodus, adds that he was also called Aelius Verus (Ae. Ver. 1); and Capitolinus twice names him Aelius Verus (Ant. P. 4, Ver. 1). Moreover, Spartian says that the elder Lucius was at first named Lucius Aurelius Verus, and that his father was Cejonius Commodus, who is called by some Verus, by others Lucius Aurelius, and by others Annius (Ae. Ver. 1, cf. Had. 23). This would suggest that Marcus and his colleague Lucius were related either by blood or by adoption before ever they were connected in the latter way through the condition which Hadrian imposed upon Titus Antoninus. Still, it seems most natural to imagine that, as Hadrian gave the elder

Marcus had been adopted did not oblige him to take Lucius into partnership ; and the conduct of Titus was opposed to the idea that he expected or desired any such event. Besides this there were deterrent reasons of great force. Lucius was too idle, incapable, and profligate to make a useful partner, and his habits must have been singularly repulsive to Marcus, who had known him intimately for twenty-three years. Hence neither selfishness nor partiality could have determined the choice. I can only think that Marcus acted in deference to the supposed wish of Hadrian, and in the delusive hope that public responsibility would make Lucius a better man. There is no doubt that in giving authority to this unworthy person Marcus committed a grave mistake, which he subsequently repeated in the case of his own son. But the fact that base considerations cannot be imputed to him in the earlier matter helps to vindicate the purity of his motives in the later one.

The joint Emperors began their reign by courting popular favour. They honoured the projected marriage of Lucius and Lucilla by ordering the sons and the daughters of all new citizens to be inscribed on the lists of those eligible to receive subsidies of grain. Then

Lucius his family name Aelius, and as Titus Antoninus gave Marcus his family name Aurelius, even so Titus likewise gave the name Aurelius to the younger Lucius, and Marcus gave him his family name Verus. The history of those times is greatly confused, and we are dependent upon authorities comparatively late and obviously careless. Hence it is possible that, because the younger Lucius bore the names Aurelius and Verus, it came to pass that some one who overlooked the fact that they were given to him by Titus and Marcus respectively concluded that he derived them from his father, and even from his grandfather. This surmise is strongly supported by Eusebius, who in his CHRONICLE twice gives the names of the joint emperors in the following manner; "*Marcus Aurelius, qui et Verus, et Lucius Commodus*" (pp. 263, 385).

they went out to the camp of the royal guard, where they presented twenty thousand sesterces apiece to the soldiers and proportionate amounts to the officers. The force consisted of sixteen thousand men, each serving for sixteen years, and then receiving a sum equal to the above gratuity. As a thousand sesterces then had the value of £7 16s. 3d., the soldiers received from Marcus and Lucius on this occasion £156 5s. individually and £2,500,000 collectively. The total is not small, but it was a good investment. The guards were a danger to their masters, and thirty-two years later they put up the empire for sale !

Returning to the city, the two Emperors conducted the obsequies of their predecessor with great magnificence. They delivered funeral orations, and established the worship due to the deceased in virtue of his apotheosis by the Senate. Nor did they omit to celebrate the splendid games and pageants traditionally given in honour of the illustrious dead.[1] As Trajan knew, doles and shows were the best means of keeping the Roman people in obedience.[2] The first stayed their hunger, and the second made them forget their drudgery. Modern rulers have taken the lesson to heart. The foregoing events were barely over when fate inaugurated the long series of calamities that afflicted the empire throughout the reign of Marcus and involved him in perpetual struggles. The Tiber, which had a comparatively narrow bed, and which became very shallow in summer, was liable to overflow from tidal waves and from the heavy rains and melting snows of spring. A disaster of this kind now occurred. Buildings and goods were injured and a great number of animals destroyed. Famine attended the inundation. The Emperors promptly

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 7, 8. [2] Fronto, Princip. Hist. p. 210.

devised means to alleviate the distress thus occasioned, and their popularity must have been considerably increased by the success of their measures.[1] Graver spectres now began to appear, but to understand their coming it is necessary to glance into the more distant past. At first Rome was a small town and Italy a land of tribes. In course of time, by wars and treaties, the Romans obtained more and more towns and subjugated more and more tribes, till at last all the country came into their power.

But this was not enough to satisfy such an energetic and ambitious race. They forced their way east and west, north and south. The Spanish Peninsula, Gaul, and the British Isles, the greater part of Central Europe; the whole of the Balkans, of Greece, of Asia Minor, of Armenia, of Syria, of Egypt; and all the North of Africa, were subdued and long occupied. There were also remoter conquests, with briefer occupations. To many of these lands, particularly to those of the North and the West, the Romans brought the so-called blessings of civilization. From Greece, the Orient, and Egypt they derived a vast increase of the same appreciable advantages. If capacity gives a title to dominion, the victors had no ordinary claim. They excelled in all military and administrative arts. The conquests were skilfully protected, and the rights of the conquered were discreetly admitted. Now and then, yet much less frequently than might have been expected, local authorities abused their power for the purpose of extortion; but they were liable to impeachment and to restitution, and striking examples of these penalties occurred. Thus, although it is tyranny for one race to govern another by force, yet it cannot be denied that the Roman tyranny was

[1] Cap. M. Ant 8.

gilded with as much benevolence as any before or since. But tyranny is one of those evils which the more they spread the likelier they are to perish.

The foreign subjects of the Romans, as I said, included both civilized peoples and barbarians. At the time in question the former had reached a degree of enervation which made them thankful to be under the guard of a powerful state ; while the barbarians, on the contrary, were beginning to acquire the military science of their masters, and to discover that they might use it both to dismiss them and to relieve them of many desirable things. The unconquered or half-conquered kindred of these tribes were engaged in similar discoveries. To realize such dreams is not the affair of a moment ; but they were at last fully realized, and at this very time the realization was in process.

Besides the difficulties which the Romans experienced from their foreign subjects, they were exposed to others from neighbouring powers who vied with them in the game of annexing territory. At three different periods, in the space of ninety years from B.C. 264 to 146, they became engaged in a Titanic struggle with the Carthaginians, which ended in their favour. Seven years later they were at odds with the Parthians, and they encountered them again and again in the next three centuries, defeating them often, but never reducing them to final subjection.

The ancient Parthia (now the Province of Irak in modern Persia) is a district surrounded with mountains. The inhabitants were a hardy race of Scythian origin. They mastered the Persians and founded an empire. This lasted from B.C. 254 to A.D. 220, and in its best days it extended over the vast area which is bounded on the north by Georgia, the Caspian Sea, and Tartary, on the west by the Euphrates, on the south by the

Persian Gulf, and on the east by the Indus. Egypt and Libya were tributaries. Early in the second half of the first century B.C. Crassus, who was holding the eastern provinces of Rome, while Pompey and Caesar were sharing the rest, sought to enrich himself by invading the Parthian Empire, which had been for some time in alliance with the Roman Republic. He sustained a severe defeat, and was slain treacherously on meeting the enemy to arrange terms. Afterwards the Parthians helped the Syrians to revolt against Mark Antony. Ventidius, one of Antony's generals, routed them, but they in turn routed Antony. Later still the alliance was restored. Then the Parthians broke it in the reign of Trajan by violating Armenia. He took their capital and their chief provinces, and removed their king, giving them another, and placing him under his own suzerainty. Hadrian, who relinquished many of Trajan's conquests, including Parthia, allowed the Parthians to restore their former king, and provided another throne for the one thus deposed. He also sent back the daughter of the restored monarch, and promised to return the royal seat, both of which Trajan had removed. This generosity was rightly interpreted ; and during the whole of his reign Hadrian enjoyed the friendship of the Parthians.[1] Titus Antoninus displayed more vigour. He refused the Parthian king the promised throne, and he deterred him by a letter from invading Armenia.[2] Probably vexed at these things, Vologesus, who, on the death of his father, the friend of Hadrian, had succeeded to the empire of Parthia, cherished enmity against the Romans, and prepared for war, attending a favourable opportunity. This he made for himself under Marcus and Lucius by repeating his father's plan of attacking

[1] Spart. HAD. 13 ; but he once suppressed a disturbance diplomatically (12). [2] Cap. ANT. P. 9.

Armenia. Trajan had put an imperial legate over the Armenians, but Hadrian had permitted them to choose a king; and Titus Antoninus had defended their monarch against the Parthians.[1] Hence, at the present invasion, the country appears to have been a Protectorate rather than a Province. Vologesus began by investing Elegia (now Ilidjah), a city on the left bank of the Euphrates, facing the great plain of Erzeroum. Severianus, legate of Cappadocia, acting on the advice of an impostor, had occupied this place, designing to stem an invasion. But its defences were worthless, and in three days it fell, Severianus perishing with an entire legion.[2] Vologesus then reduced the whole of Armenia into his power. Next he fell upon Syria, routing and slaying the governor Atidius Cornelianus, devastating the country, and taking many cities, till Antioch itself appeared in danger.[3] At Rome the Parthians were considered formidable enemies. Their great resources and their proved valour excited the respect of the upper class, while the mystery of their origin and the legend of their exploits inspired the populace with a kind of superstitious dread.

"Terga conversi metuenda Parthi,"

declares Seneca, alluding to their deadly practice of shooting backwards when in retreat. It would be at this time that Fronto sent Marcus the consolatory effusion which the editors entitle *De Bello Parthico*, and which must be either a letter or an essay. The purport is that bad beginnings may have good endings, and that the Romans had more than once experienced disaster before experiencing victory. A great misfortune, he says, may serve the turn of the precious ring that

[1] *Ib.* 9.

[2] Dio, lxxi, 2; Des Vergers, pp. 32, 33. He refers to Lucian's ALEXANDER SIVE PSEUDOMANTIS, xxii, 27, and QUO MODO HIST. SIT CONSCRIB. xxv, 21.

[3] Dio, lxxi, 2.

Polycrates sacrificed to the envious gods ; though in his case the sacrifice was rejected.[1]

As misfortunes are said to be gregarious, it is no wonder to hear that at this critical moment other troubles loomed upon the horizon. War impended in Britain ; and the Chattians, a fierce tribe inhabiting the modern Hesse, were making incursions into Rhaetia, an important province between the Rhine and the Danube. Against the Britons, Marcus sent Calpurnius Agricola ; and against the Chattians, his schoolfellow Aufidius Victorinus.[2] Moreover, approved by the Senate, he dispatched Lucius to conduct the Parthian campaign ; and, as a sign of honour, he, with some senatorial friends and the principal officials, accompanied him till they came within twenty miles of Naples, to Capua, whence he was to depart across the country for a port of embarkation on the south-east coast. Lucius, however, who viewed the journey as one of pleasure, amused himself so much at the various towns on the way that after reaching Canusium, thirteen miles from the sea, he fell dangerously ill, being threatened with apoplexy, and having to be cupped. Learning this, Marcus set out for Canusium ; but, hearing that Lucius had embarked, he returned to Rome, and conveyed to him immediately the good wishes of the Senate.[3] Neither the warning he had received, nor the critical state of the Roman army, caused Lucius to alter his behaviour. He dallied at Corinth and Athens, and at all the famous maritime towns of Asia Minor, Pamphylia and Cilicia, passing his time in agreeable distractions ; and when at last he reached Syria he fixed his headquarters near the coast, instead of proceeding inland to the seat of war. During the four years that hostilities lasted he passed the winter

[1] Naber, p. 217. [2] Cap. M. Ant. 8.
[3] *Ib.* 8 ; Fronto, *Ad Ver. Imp.* ii, 6.

at Laodicea, in Asia Minor; the summer at Daphnè, an ill-famed suburb of Antioch; and the other seasons at Antioch itself, which was then a great, gay, and splendid city, voluptuous and dissolute to the last degree. Once only, and then at the insistence of his knights, did he set out as far as the Euphrates. He became the laughing-stock of the Syrians, and was made the subject of jests upon the stage.[1] From a mutilated passage in Fronto it would even appear that Lucius proposed terms to Vologesus. The time and the nature of the proposals are not stated, but it is added that "the barbarian spurned the offered peace, and was badly punished."[2] To remedy the effects of the lax discipline which the conduct of Lucius was sure to produce, Marcus placed the forces in Syria under the command of Avidius Cassius, one of his best generals.[3]

The eventuality of this appointment he had foreseen at the beginning of his reign, as is proved by the fact that, having become consul for the third time in the January of A.D. 161, he ceded the office to Cassius in the May of the same year, thus providing him with the authority requisite to hold the supreme command in a campaign of the first importance.[4] Dio says that Cassius was a native of Cyros in Syria, and that his father was a rhetorician named Heliodoros, who became prefect of Egypt.[5] Gallicanus, however, who wrote the life of

[1] Cap. VER. 6, 7. [2] Fronto, PRINCIP. HIST. p. 28.

[3] Gal. AVID. CAS. 5. Capitolinus (ver. 7) says that the generals conducting the Parthian War were Statius Priscus, Avidius Cassius, and Martius Verus, but I have not been able to trace the exploits of the last-named.

[4] Des Vergers, p. 34. He quotes the confirmatory inscription from Cardinali, *Diplomi imperiali*, tab. xxi, p. 232–233, adding a reference to Borghesi, *Iscrizioni di Sepino*, p. 37. Liebenham has "161. M. Aelius Aurelius Verus Caesar III :: L. Aelius Aurelius Commodus II (seit 7 März : Im. Caes. L. Aurelius Verus. Aug. II). ¶ P. Furius Saturninus." The last also commanded in the Parthian War. [5] lxxi, 22.

Cassius, tells a different story. He represents him as the son of Avidius Severus, a man of humble origin, who made his way from inferior offices in the army to the highest dignities, and enjoyed the esteem of Marcus, into whose reign he survived.[1] It is possible that the man was at first called Heliodorus, and that, abandoning words for weapons, he changed his name to Severus. A teacher of grammar, named Pertinax,[2] won fame as a general under Marcus, and subsequently became Emperor! In any case, if, as is also said, Avidius Cassius was descended from the Cassius who, with Brutus and others, slew Julius Caesar as a foe to liberty, the descent must have been on the maternal side. In a letter to the prefect about this appointment Marcus says :—

> To Avidius Cassius I have given the Syrian legions. They were dissolving in luxury and practising Daphnic manners. Cassonius Vectilianus wrote that he found them using hot baths. I do not think I have erred; if perchance thou knowest Cassius, a man of Cassian severity and discipline. Nor can soldiers be ruled except by the ancient discipline. Thou knowest the line written by a good poet [Ennius], and familiar to all :—
>
> By antique men and manners stands the Roman State.
>
> See only that the legions have abundant provisions, which, if I know Cassius rightly, will not be lost.

The prefect answered :—

> Thou hast done wisely, my lord, to put Cassius over the Syrian legions, for nothing is better than to have a severe man over the Greek soldiers. He indeed will get rid of the hot baths and shake off the flowers from the head, neck, and bosom of the

[1] Gal. Avid. Cas. 1. [2] Cap. Per. 1.

army. All the provisions are ready ; nor is anything wanting under a good leader, for he neither asks nor spends much.[1]

These expectations were justified by events. On his arrival Cassius immediately issued a proclamation that any soldier found at Daphne would return degraded. He removed all delicacies from the camp, and told the men that if they did not mend their ways they should pass the winter in the tents. There was a weekly inspection of arms, clothes, and boots, and a weekly exercise of the whole of the troops, with their respective weapons. He said that, as athletes, hunters, and gladiators were exercised, it was disgraceful that this should not be the case with soldiers, whose labours would be less trying if more customary.[2] The history of the Parthian campaign is very obscure. For the Romans it was of considerable importance to get back the prestige lost in Armenia, and to keep the Parthians from going out of that country to ravage Asia Minor ; but it was even more important to guard Antioch against the formidable danger threatened by an attack of the victorious Parthians from Armenia in combination with those from Mesopotamia, who had conquered part of Syria and were fighting onwards to the city. The loss of Antioch would have been comparable with the greatest disasters which the Romans had ever sustained beyond Italy. To avert it the following measures were taken. The legation of Cappadocia, a province contiguous to the south-west of Armenia and to the north-west of Syria, was given to Statius Priscus when rendered vacant by the tragic end of Severianus, the ill-advised leader who perished with his men at the beginning of the war. Here Marcus once more exhibited his fine

[1] Gal. Avid. Cas. 5. [2] *Ib.* 6.

discernment in the choice of generals, and also one or two other rare qualities. Statius Priscus had had an interesting history. After filling various appointments, both civil and military, he was made legate of Britain shortly before the decease of Titus Antoninus, and while there he declined an offer of the empire made to him by his troops, probably upon the Emperor's death. Still, he had either resigned or been recalled in the brief interval before he received from Marcus the weighty charge of Cappadocia.[1] He justified that appointment by carrying the war into Armenia and forcing his way through difficult country to Artaxata in the upper division. This city, famous as the abode of the Armenian kings, stood on the river Araxes, which encompassed it on three sides, the fourth being defended by a moat and a rampart. The place had been constructed by Hannibal for his host King Araxias, and, however it might have suffered since then, the Parthians would have no difficulty in fortifying it. But Priscus took it, and thus completed the reconquest of Armenia.[2] Soemus, King of the Armenians, who had fled before the Parthians and found refuge at Rome, where he was taken into the Senate and nominated consul, got no small benefit from the victory of Priscus, for it put him back upon his throne. Medals struck at the time in honour of Lucius show that hero occupying a high seat, with a person standing before him upon whose head he is putting a crown. The inscription mentions that the recipient is the Armenian king, and that Lucius is in

[1] Des Vergers, pp. 29, 30, 37.

[2] Cap. M. Ant. 9. Fronto, *Ad Ver. Imp.* ii, 1, mentions the capture of Dausara and of Nicephorum immediately before mentioning that of Artaxata. But Nicephorum (otherwise Callinicum) was on the Euphrates in Mesopotamia, not far from Sura in Syria, and quite a long way from Armenia. I cannot trace Dausara.

the fourth period of his tribunitian power. This gives A.D. 164 as the year when Soemus was restored to his bereaved people.[1] Lucius wrote an account of the Armenian campaign to the Senate, asking that Marcus should receive the title Armeniacus, and doubtless presuming that he himself would in any case receive it. Marcus, however, declined the honour at that time, but accepted it subsequently. Fronto, who had trained Lucius in rhetoric, and who was proud of his scholar's real or imaginary success in that art, wrote him a long, adulatory, and tedious missive upon this occasion. Therein he says that "under the guidance and the auspices" of Lucius cities have been taken by arms; but Lucius himself, and none other, has ventured with the forces of eloquence to assail "the fortified, unconquered, and inexpugnable citadel" in the breast of his brother when requesting him to assume the name of Armeniacus, "which he had refused." Then he adds that other leaders had conquered Armenia before Marcus and Lucius, but that Marcus by his oration and Lucius by his epistle have rendered themselves more famous than many princes by their triumphs.[2]

While Statius Priscus engaged the foe, Avidius Cassius was not idle. A study of the map in conjunction with certain fragmentary notices borrowed by M. Des Vergers from Lucian of Samosata, who flourished at the time, suggests the following scheme of events.

Advancing from Antioch, Cassius crossed Syria to the Euphrates, where the enemy, whether they had or had not opposed his march, prepared to offer him a solid resistance. A fierce struggle took place at Europos, three days' journey above Sura, and therefore not far from Hierapolis. At Sura itself there was another great

[1] Des Vergers, pp. 55, 56. [2] Fronto, *Ad Ver. Imp.* ii, 1.

battle. Having won these engagements, Cassius, with the enemy fleeing before him, entered Mesopotamia, and went up the course of the Bilecha, a tributary of the Euphrates, until he reached Edessa, the capital of Osroene, a Mesopotamian principality bordering on Syria and Armenia. This city he also took. Other small kingdoms under the Parthian sway yielded to the Roman arms, and their subjugation was commemorated by a coinage which bore sometimes the head of Marcus or of Lucius, and at others that of Faustina or of Lucilla—a most elegant adjustment of the tribute due respectively to Mars and Venus. The Parthians were driven across the plains of Mesopotamia right up to the Tigris, and one of their generals had to save himself by swimming the river.[1]

Vologesus, weakened by his reverses and by the defection of his allies, withdrew into his own land. Cassius, proceeding southwards alongside the Tigris, inflicted terrible calamities upon the foe. There was near to the site of Bagdad a city named Seleucia, which Seleucus Nicator, one of Alexander's generals, built upon the Tigris to spite Babylon upon the Euphrates, whence he imported 500,000 people for his new town. Three miles from Seleucia, on the other side of the Tigris, stood Ctesiphon, once a village, but then a great city, where the Parthian monarchs spent the winter after enjoying the summer at Ecbatana in Media. Cassius burnt Seleucia, and razed the stately palace of Ctesiphon to the ground. Babylon had a similar fate.[2] According to Eutropius, 40,000 persons were taken at Seleucia, but Sextus Rufus puts the number at 400,000.

[1] Des Vergers, p. 56. He refers to the QUO MODO HIST. SIT CONSCRIB. 19, 20, 21, 28, 29, but he seems to have taken some other work of Lucian into account, perhaps the PSEUDOMANTIS.

[2] Dio, lxxi, 2.

The former names them "men," the latter calls them "enemies." Orosius agrees with Eutropius in the name, and with Rufus in the number. If troops are concerned the lower figure is the more probable, but if inhabitants are intended the higher is quite credible. It is declared, but I know not on what authority, that Cassius put 300,000 of the population to death.[1] Capitolinus, giving no particulars, says that a pestilence which followed the severity of Cassius at Seleucia was imputed to the anger of the gods, because the people destroyed were said to have been friendly to the Romans; but he adds that [Asinus] Quadratus [a belauded historian] and other writers have refuted the story by attributing to the Seleucians a breach of faith before the massacre.[2] The final stages of the campaign are as follows. It was customary for emperors to be acclaimed on momentous occasions, and the number of such acclamations received by any emperor figures on inscriptions relating to him, as is also the case with respect to his consulates and to the years of his tribunitian power. Marcus and Lucius were acclaimed upon their accession, then upon the re-conquest of Armenia, and again upon the capture of Ctesiphon. The year A.D. 165 was the date of their third acclamation. They had another before very long to celebrate the entry of Cassius into Media, an event which ended the war. For in A.D. 166 Vologesus, fearing lest Ecbatana might vanish like Ctesiphon, solicited peace, and received it on terms which included the loss of Mesopotamia.[3] Thus the bounds to which the valour of Trajan had extended the Roman Empire, and from which the prudence of Hadrian had contracted it, were gloriously reattained.

The year A.D. 166, which saw the end of the Parthian

[1] Haydn's DICTIONARY OF DATES, London, 1889, art. *Massacres.*
[2] VER. 8. [3] Des Vergers, p. 60, 56, 57.

War, was memorable also for the first visit paid to China by a Roman embassy. It is the celestial annalists who record this interesting fact. They say that the ambassadors were despatched by the Roman Emperor An-tun (Antoninus) to the Chinese Emperor Hiouan-ti; that they brought as presents, the teeth of the elephant, the horns of the rhinoceros, and the shell of the tortoise; and that they entered from the south, instead of by the ordinary route through Asia. This last statement suggests that the embassy was despatched before the conclusion of the peace, and while the Parthians were still commanding the high way into China. M. Des Vergers, to whom I am indebted for the above piece of news, introduces it with a slight hint of dubitation, adding that the task of the envoys would surely be to study the trade in silk, a commodity then worth its weight in gold; and that his compatriot, M. Latronne, thinks they were probably merchants who posed as ambassadors to give themselves credit.[1] After their victory the Romans sustained a severe disaster, for, on his way back to Antioch, Cassius lost a great part of his army from famine and disease.[2] The glory of his exploits, however, made him the idol of the soldiery and of the populace. In a letter from Fronto to Cassius we read how the military tribune, Junius Maximus, had sat till late into the night regaling Fronto with stories of Cassius; of his marches; of his discipline, modelled and preserved after the ancient fashion; of his strenuous vigour in leading and in fighting; and of his keen eye for opportunities.[3] The popularity of their distinguished general was not without danger for the two emperors. Avidius Cassius shared the views of his alleged ancestor. It is said that when only a youth he was stopped by his

[1] Pp. 57, 58. [2] Dio, lxxi, 2. [3] *Ad Amic.* i, 6.

father in the attempt to wrest the empire from Titus Antoninus. He detested the imperial name, and used to say that the worst about it was that it could not be removed from the republic except by another emperor.[1] These sentiments, together with his resolute character and his military genius, caused his chiefs to regard him with perpetual suspicion. Hence it is not surprising to find Lucius writing thus to Marcus :—

> Avidius Cassius, whom I wish that thou wouldest order to be observed, seems to me desirous of the empire ; and already, a while ago, under my grandfather, thy father, he was remarked. All our doings displease him. He is getting too much influence. He derides our love of letters. He calls thee a philosophical little old woman ; and me, a wanton imbecile. See what is to be done. I do not hate the man ; but take care lest it be not well for thee and for thy children, when thou hast amongst thy officers such men as the soldiers gladly hear and gladly see.

Marcus replied :

> I have read thy letter, which is more solicitous than imperial, and does not suit our time. For, if the empire is divinely granted to him, we shall not be able to slay him even if we desire. Thou knowest the saying of thy great-grandfather: "No one slays his successor." In the other case, he himself will fall into the snares of fate without our cruelty. Add, that we cannot accuse him whom none accuses, and whom, as thou sayest, the soldiers love. Moreover, in accusations for sedition, they against whom it is proved appear to suffer violence. Thou thyself knowest what thy grandfather Hadrian said: "Wretched is the condition of emperors ; for it is not believed that they have been conspired against till they have been slain." I

[1] Gal. Avid. Cas. 1.

> prefer to give the example of Domitian, who is the first reported to have said this. For the good sayings of tyrants have not so much authority as they deserve. Therefore let Cassius do as he likes, especially since he is a good leader, firm and brave, and useful to the republic. As to your advice to provide by his death for the security of my children, let my children perish if Avidius deserves to be loved more than they ; and if it is more expedient for the republic that Cassius lives than the children of Marcus.[1]

In strict accordance with the spirit of this letter, Marcus appointed Cassius governor of all Asia.[2] The Parthian War lasted four years after Lucius came to the East ; but there he spent five years.[3] Being haunted by a desire to shine, he felt the necessity of having his deeds recorded by a complaisant pen, and therefore he asked Fronto to write the history of the campaign, offering his own reports and those of his subordinates as material for the work, and declaring his willingness to write a special account if told how to do it. He goes on to say that, for the purpose in view, his orations to the Senate and his addresses to the army will not be despised, while his discourses to the barbarians will prove of great use. The order should be, first, the causes and the commencement of the war ; then, the misconduct of operations before he arrived ; and, lastly, his deeds. To the end that these may be duly appreciated, it is very necessary to show how superior the Parthians were to the Romans before his arrival. Fronto assumed this task. The opening of the work *Principia Historiae* is all that survives. This evokes no regret for what is lost, and it adds very little indeed to our knowledge. Fronto attributes the reformation of the Syrian legions to

[1] Gal. Avid. Cas. 1, 2. [2] Dio, lxxi, 3.
[3] Cap. Ver. 7, M. Ant. 12.

Lucius, and exhibits him as an exemplar of industry, temperance, frugality, and simplicity. He compares him advantageously with great commanders, and says that he surpassed Trajan in clemency and in fidelity.[1] The courtly panegyric of Fronto finds echo in three later writers. Dio assigns Lucius the merit of amassing troops under capable generals, and of ordering and assembling military supplies.[2] Victor (De Caes.) says that, under the guidance of Lucius, the Parthians, at first successful, were at last overcome. Sextus Rufus declares that Lucius did many and great things, and also took Seleucia!

Thus, but for Marius Maximus and Asinius Quadratus, the authorities of Capitolinus and Gallicanus, the truth of the matter might have escaped our knowledge. Eutropius either accepts or confirms the statement of these reporters, for he says that Lucius, tarrying at Antioch and near Armenia, did many and great things through his generals. Orosius still more briefly mentions this vicarious achievement of mighty deeds.[3]

Marcus consented to share with Lucius the titles Armeniacus, Parthicus, and Medicus.[4] The civic crown

[1] P. 209. [2] lxxi, 2.

[3] In his little work entitled "How History Should be Written" Lucian ridicules the follies committed by the many authors who undertook to describe this Parthian War. Here is a passage from the translation made by Dr. Thomas Francklin in 1780:—

> The writer I just now mentioned.....tells us.....how on Priscus, the general, bawling out loud, seven-and-twenty of the enemy fell down dead upon the spot. He has told lies, moreover, about the number of the slain, in contradiction to the account given in by the leaders. He will have it that seventy thousand two hundred and thirty-six of the enemy died at Europus, and of the Romans only two and nine wounded. Surely nobody in their senses can bear this.

The most amusing of all is that Fronto credits Lucius, and not Cassius, with having reformed the morals of the troops at Antioch. *Ad Ver. Imp.* ii, 1.

[4] Cap. Ver. 7.

was given to both Emperors, and they were named fathers of their country, an honour which Marcus had refused in the absence of his brother. Lucius demanded that Marcus should figure with him in the Parthian Triumph, and that the sons of Marcus should be called Caesars.[1] This latter circumstance is of value in assisting to fix the date of the Triumph. For Lampridius asserts that Commodus was numbered with the Caesars on the fourth of the Ides of October under the Consuls Prudens and Pollio, which would be October 12 in the year 166.[2] At this Triumph the sons and the daughters of Marcus, even the unmarried girls, rode in the triumphal car, and they witnessed the triumphal games in the triumphal dress. Although Marcus thus shared with Lucius the name Parthicus and the honours of the Parthian Triumph, yet, nevertheless, after the death of Lucius, he called himself only Germanicus, which title he gained in his own proper war.[3] This modesty is all the more impressive because, although neither Marcus nor Lucius had faced the foe, Marcus had unquestionably made a far greater effort than Lucius towards the attainment of the victory.

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 12.
[2] Com. 11, Liebenham, p. 24; Des Vergers, p. 59, note.
[3] Cap. M. Ant. 12.

Chapter VIII

LATER CORRESPONDENCE OF MARCUS AND FRONTO

161[1]

In the surviving order of the letters to and from Fronto there is his correspondence, first with Marcus as Caesar, next with Marcus as Emperor, and then with Lucius as Emperor; after which occur four epistles on oratory. Of these the last two bear the superscription, "Fronto to Antoninus Augustus"; while modern editors give the first two the same superscription, and entitle all the four *De Eloquentia*. The date 162 is suggested, but from the circumstance that Fronto makes prodigious efforts to show Marcus the utility of rhetoric, and to overcome his scruples about cultivating it, I infer that he must have been writing very soon after Marcus ascended the throne; for upon this event, as will shortly be observed, Marcus began to apprehend the importance of oratory and to consult Fronto on the subject with insistence. The first of the four letters is the longest, and it contains some interesting allusions. Caesars, affirms Fronto, need eloquence to address the Senate and popular assemblies, to correct unjust law, to compose official letters, to interpellate foreign kings, to correct the faults of allies, to belaud favours, to repress the seditious, and to terrify the ferocious. For all these matters have to be transacted by speech or in

[1] *De Eloqu.* 1–4; *Ver.* i, 3, 4, 1; *Ant.* ii, 2, 1; *Fer. Als.* 2, 4, 3, 1; *Ant.* ii, 4, 5, 6; *De Bel. Parth.* Naber gives *Ver.* i, 3, 4, 1; *Ant.* ii, 2, 1; *Fer. Als. Ant.* ii, 4, 5, 6; and *De Bel. Parth.*

writing. Will Marcus not cultivate that which he may see is about to be of great use to him in such numerous and important affairs? He errs if he thinks that the rough-and-ready language of Thersites would have the same effect upon the Senate as the chosen words of Menelaus and Ulysses. Certainly the wise man does not desire what is wholly dependent upon fortune; but, when choice is possible, preferable things should be preferred; and so it is with eloquence. Fronto has sometimes heard Marcus say that speaking well gives him pleasure, and that on this account he flees eloquence. But should he not rather correct the emotion than flee its cause? If he feels pleasure in judging justly or in being pious towards his kindred, will he renounce justice and spurn piety? Let him scourge himself and not eloquence. Will not the gods know if the benches of Cato, Gracchus, and Cicero become silent, and if the land which Marcus has received vocal is made dumb by him? Lycurgus was punished for cutting off the vine. One god protects vines, many gods protect eloquence.

The second letter has almost entirely perished. In the third Fronto says that Marcus, whose studies were known to him at the beginning, had then received from the gods a sublime, lofty, and ample genius. Already his nobility of mind and dignity of sentiment were shining forth; words alone were in default, and these Fronto was teaching him by various exercises. Subsequently, from tedium of labour, Marcus abandoned rhetoric and turned to philosophy, where the exercises are less numerous and less arduous. Now he may usefully employ his leisure in auxiliary work, such as collecting synonyms, searching out terms, etc. He should not despise these practices because of previous instruction, for the same would apply to the pursuits of philosophy.

In the fourth letter Fronto derides the philosophers,

and again pretends that Marcus follows them because they are less severe than the rhetoricians in the imposition of tasks. Lucius, who like Marcus was taught by Fronto, and who in all probability had ceased to take lessons (though for reasons very different from those of his brother), now felt the need of resuming his studies. In a letter to Fronto he expresses a lively regret for having just departed before his old master visited the palace; and he blames Marcus for not having called him back upon receiving the visit. Fronto replies that it gives him pleasure to have missed Lucius, because the letter received in consequence is so delightful. He had returned to Rome on March 18, four months previously. In a letter now lost Lucius had made some complaint about the eloquence of Fronto, probably on the ground of its being too ornate. The old man in his reply touchingly observes :—

> What thou wouldest is perhaps right, but it is too late. For age does not permit all that reason may demand. Wilt thou compel a swan in its last song to rival the notes of a crow?

Different sculptors, orators, and poets, he adds, have all had different modes of expression. Besides, if your host offered you a certain wine, would you ask for another vintage? Marcus was now studying Fronto's orations assiduously. Hearing this, Fronto writes that he begins to think well of himself because Marcus thinks so well of him. As regards the laudatory address to Titus Antoninus which Marcus specially admires, it was impossible not to excel on such a theme. But what pleases him most is that the praises and the hopes which he then uttered in respect to Marcus have been more than justified. Marcus, who studies the classics at stolen moments, asks Fronto to send what is best to read. His little girls are at Matidia's in the town, and

cannot visit him o' nights for the cold. He sends Fronto their greetings with those of their mother and of Lucius.

Marcus having gone to the four days' fêtes at Alsium,[1] a maritime city of Etruria, Fronto addressed him a letter with literary references suitable to the occasion. This is badly mutilated, several lines having vanished. Marcus, in what I take to be his reply, mentions having heard that his little daughter is much better, and that she runs about in her room. Content with little food, he was reading at table the second hour of night, while the others were feasting. Apparently Fronto had exhorted him to take rest, for he answers a certain "exhortation" by punning agreeably upon the word *adquiesco*. He adds: "The respect of duty is an imperious thing. Who knows this better than thou?" Then follows commiseration for a pain in Fronto's hand, which he had probably alluded to in the lines now effaced. This way of spending holidays was but little to the taste of Fronto, who expostulated in a lengthy epistle full of literary graces. He had supposed that the reason of Marcus for visiting Alsium was to seek repose, and to amuse himself by reading the poets, by sailing and bathing, and by feasting on the excellent meats of the locality, especially its piscatory dainties. He exclaims: "Tell me, I pray thee, hast thou gone to Alsium to famish in view of the sea? What? Couldest thou not afflict thyself at Lorium with hunger, thirst, and work? They say that the sea itself takes a holiday when the king-fishers are brooding. Is a king-fisher worthier of peaceful leisure than thou with thy chicks?" The illustrious predecessors of Marcus were wont to relax their minds by innocent distractions. Romulus and the heroes who kidnapped the Sabine maidens

[1] Here the true order of the letters is 2, 4, 31.

certainly practised no untimely abstinence. The holy Numa enjoyed good cheer. Even Chrysippus liked to wet his whistle. As to Socrates, he was a famous feaster besides being the disciple of Aspasia and the master of Alcibiades. Anyhow, if Marcus insists upon renouncing sport, leisure, satiety, and pleasure, let him at least sleep as much as is permitted to a free man. Is not the sun sufficient for him in hearing cases without his burning the lamp to think them over at night?

Marcus, writing, as I think, in answer to this letter, says that he will not describe how they fêted the fêtes at Alsium lest his master should get vexed and rate him. He adds that upon returning to Lorium he found his "little lady" feverish. The rest of the letter is indecipherable. Later on, Marcus then rusticating, as it seems, for the vintage, says that, although engrossed in affairs, he will find time to improve himself in public speaking by the reading of Cicero, if Fronto will indicate the proper works. Fronto, who complains of being tormented in all his members, especially in the neck and the groin, sends Marcus extracts that he had made from Cicero, asking him, in two cases, to have any useful parts transcribed and then to return him the originals, as he had no copy. He adds: "I consider that all the epistles of Cicero should be read, even more than his orations. Nothing is more perfect than the epistles of Cicero." In another letter Fronto sends Marcus copious quotations from Sallust the historian. The writing entitled *De Bello Parthico* belongs to the end of this year.

162[1]

Marcus greets the birthday of Fronto in a kindly letter. Among other things, he tells him :—

[1] *Ant.* i, 1, 2; *De Orat. Ver.* ii, 8, 6, 2. Naber gives *Ant.* i, 12; *De Eloq.*, *De Orat.*, and *Ver.* 8, 6, 2.

> Our Faustina recovers health. Our chick Antoninus coughs somewhat less. In our little nest each one that has discernment prays for thee. Again, again, yet again, sweetest master, enjoy good health to a long old age. I pray thee not to disturb thyself to come to Lorium for the birthday of our Cornificia. The gods being willing, thou shalt see us at Rome in a few days.

Fronto replies in a lengthy epistle. All the good things that Marcus wishes for him are contained in the prosperity of Marcus and Lucius. Apart from this, his spell of life is sufficient, for it has permitted him to see Marcus attain the greatness, virtue, and popularity that he had desired and vouched for him at the beginning. In touching words, he describes his joy that Marcus has come back to rhetoric, and that he is not less proficient therein for want of practice. As parents love to trace their features in their children, so does he delight to find in the speeches of Marcus the characteristics of his own oratory. Those who have a turn for eloquence, and who have been thoroughly taught its principles, quickly recover it even after having long abandoned its pursuit. He never knew any one with a more fertile genius than Marcus; and he has often excited the bile of Victorinus by making this assertion, and by denying that he approaches Marcus in the quality named. Even the Roman Rusticus, who would gladly have given his life for the little finger nail of Marcus, would only yield sadly and unwillingly on the point. Like all persons of great ingenuity, Marcus has need to be careful in the choice of words and of images. He will remember the first speech that he delivered in the Senate when little more than a boy, and the remarks that Fronto made in reference to it. He must have observed the favour and the pleasure that the Senate and the people display in hearing him, and the more

they hear the more they will be delighted, so many and so great are the charms of his genius, face, voice, and eloquence. In the use of the figures that the Greeks termed *schemata*, which of the preceding emperors can be compared with Marcus? The earthquake of Cyzicum did not move that city more rapidly or vehemently than he moved the minds of his audience in pleading the cause of the distressed Cyzicenes before the Senate. He adds :—

> I rejoice especially that thou snatchest not at obvious words, but seekest the best. For what distinguishes the great orator from the mediocre ones is that, while they are content with good words, he is not content with these, if there are any better.

In accordance with the desire of Marcus, and with the state of his own health, he has remained at home. A milder climate and his wet nurse will cause "our chick Antoninus" to lose his "little cough." Milk is the best remedy for children's throats. He himself also has "a little cough," and the pain in his hand obliges him to employ an amanuensis. He then gives further advice touching oratory, and says he expects that of Marcus to offer many new and excellent features, as he was born with surpassing genius.

Immediately after the four letters on eloquence, previously cited, there follows a long epistle written by Fronto to Marcus, somewhat later than the overflowing of the Tiber, which occurred early in his reign. The superscription has vanished, but modern editors entitle it *De Orationibus*. It contains nothing of interest except a reference to the speech which Marcus delivered in the Senate on the occasion of the above disaster. Addressing Lucius, Fronto makes some interesting remarks upon the habit of saluting by osculation, then so common among the Romans. He says that the kiss on the mouth

is a tribute paid to oratory, and that animals exchange no kisses! Incidentally, he mentions the kindness of Lucius in assisting him to get up, and to walk at various times when he was lamed by his familiar infirmities. Evidently that frivolous man was not without heart.

In another letter, written apparently when Lucius, who had started off on the Parthian campaign, was suffering at Canusium from apoplectic symptoms caused by intemperance, Fronto advises him to recover slowly the blood that he had sacrificed, and not to indulge appetites rendered acute by enforced abstinence. Lucius, in what the editors give (perhaps incorrectly) as his reply, finely excuses his delay in writing, and concludes with the remarkable words: "To transgress is human; to forgive especially human." He seems to have had a more graceful pen than Marcus.

163[1]

Fronto, writing Marcus, says:—

> I have seen what I would the most gladly have seen in my life—thy chicks with an appearance so like to thee that nothing may be liker to its like than this is. I made a short cut of the journey to Lorium; a short cut of slippery way, a short cut of steep hills. However, I saw thee, not only as present, but as doubled, whether I turned right or left. They are, thanks to the gods, rosy and noisy. One was holding white bread as a king's son; the other, black bread, as a philosopher's progeny. I pray the gods to preserve the sower, the crop, and the field that produces what so resembles [him]. I heard their little voices, so soft and so beautiful, that in the pippering of each I recognized, I know not how, the pleasant and liquid tone of thy speech. So now unless thou art mindful thou wilt find me too independent, for I

[1] *Ant.* i, 3, 4, 5. Naber gives the same.

> have those whom I may love instead of thee both with eyes and ears.

These twin brothers were born on August 31, 161. The conduct that Fronto ascribes to them is compatible with their having attained the mature age of two years. I suppose their father was away at the vintage and had deposited them at Lorium. The joy of Fronto was not at seeing them, but at seeing their strong resemblance to his lord. There is nothing to intimate that he saw them then for the first time.

The reply of Marcus to this letter is very impressive. He says :—

> I saw my little ones when thou sawest them, and I saw thee when I was reading thy letter. I pray thee, my master, love me as thou dost love me ; love me also like as thou lovest these our little ones ; still I have not said all that I wish, love me as thou didst love me. It is the wondrous delight of thy letters that makes me write these things. For what shall I say of elegance? Thou speakest Latin ; we others neither Greek nor Latin. I beg thou wilt write often to the lord my brother. The pain of his absence renders me immoderate and unrestrained (*desideria autem illius intemperantem me et violentem faciunt*). Farewell, my sweetest master ; salute thy nephew.

In his reply Fronto shows that Marcus is not reasonable in asking to be loved as he was loved. For he is now worthy of a far greater love. If his disposition of mind were loved in germ, in bud, and in flower, how much dearer will be the fruit of his mature virtue? Fronto would be a most stupid husbandman if he preferred the seed-time to the harvest. Nurses would have their nurselings remain as they are ; schoolmasters value their scholars so long as they can keep them at the book. Fronto, when educating Marcus, thought only of having him to be what he has since

become. Virtue shone in his boyhood; it shone still more in his youth, but so as to forecast the light of perfect day. Now that the full orb is resplendent, shall Fronto not have a greater love for the noontide than he had for the dawn? The more that Marcus deserves to be loved the more love should he expect. In a passage the conclusion of which is unfortunately lost the old man recalls the piety of Marcus towards the late emperor :—

> Who does not know that when thy father was ailing thou didst forgo the bath along with him, didst take less wine, water, and even food; and that as for sleep, vigils, food, and journeys, it was ever his convenience and not thine that thou tookest account of?

165[1]

Here belongs a prolix epistle from Fronto to Lucius, which I had occasion to quote in the preceding chapter, when speaking about the refusal of Marcus to be called Armeniacus. Fronto sent Marcus this letter before dispatching it to Lucius. Marcus wrote back to say that it had arrived, but that he had not been able to read it, because for the last two days he had had no time at his disposal except what sleep demanded.

In this year, according to the chronology of the editors, Fronto was severely bereaved, losing within a short interval his wife and his grandchild. A letter, evoked from Marcus by the second of these bereavements, still survives. There he tells Fronto that the way he has often suffered sympathetically with him in bodily pains will suggest how he suffers together with him in this mental pain. He is so perturbed that nothing

[1] *Ver.* ii, 1; *Ant.* ii, 3; *De Nep. Am.* 1, 2; *Ant.* ii, 7, 8; *Ver.* ii, 9, 10, 3; *Princip. Hist. Ver.* ii, 4, 5, i, 2. Naber *Ver.* ii, 1; *Ant.* ii, 2, 3; *Ver.* ii, 7; *Ant.* ii, 7, 8; *De Nep. Am. Ver.* ii, 9, 10, 3; *Princip. Hist. Ver.* ii, 4, 5, i, 2. There is *Ver.* ii, 7, a letter from Fronto recommending Gavius Clarens to Lucius.

will occur to him except to beg his master to live for his sake. For the solace that he receives from Fronto is more than the grief that Fronto can receive from any one. He dictates the letter because his hand trembles from the evening bath. The reply is long and pathetic. Fronto's life has been one of sorrow. Five of his children are dead. At the birth of each successive child he was lamenting the death of another. He forgets his own trouble in remembering that of his daughter, and of her husband Victorinus, the parents of the dead boy. He cannot understand the gods. Victorinus is so pious, humane, and upright. There is no difference of fortune between the bad and the good. Wretches bring up their offspring in safety, and leave them behind at death. This virtuous man is deprived of his well-beloved son. The doctrine of immortality may interest philosophers, but it does not console parents. To see the little grandson whom he is bringing up causes him pain, because it reminds him of the one whom he never saw and never will behold. He feels unworthy to console his daughter because, old as he is, it were fitting for him to have departed life before her child. It is from the sympathy of the best of husbands that she will receive consolation. He himself finds comfort in the near approach of death and in the thought of having passed a life free from reproach and full of service. He says much of himself that reveals a noble and beautiful character, but he says it without exciting the slightest revulsion, for his words proceed as if from the voice of conscience delivering its judgment impartially at a solemn moment and in accents of perfect truth. Another reference to the departed follows, and then come the words : " I should be iron if I could write more at this time."

Lucius, while still in Syria, wrote Marcus, asking if he or Fronto would send him Fronto's orations. Marcus

tactfully passed on the request to Fronto, sending him copies for transmission. Fronto, thanking Marcus for this attention, mentions that with these orations he is also forwarding one that he delivered against Asclepiodotus. If this had not got abroad, he would have suppressed it, because of having heard from Lucius that Marcus does not blame the man therein indicted. As, however, Marcus approves Asclepiodotus, Fronto will count him a great friend, as he does Herodes, although the oration exists. In sending these works to Lucius, Fronto complains of long ill health, worse than usual, and of continuous troubles, especially of the loss, within a few months, of a dearly-loved wife, and of a little grandson three years old. It comforts him somewhat, nevertheless, to know that Lucius has remembered him and desired his writings. He then makes the same observation about Asclepiodotus and Herodes that he had made in the previous letter, changing only the approval of Marcus for that of Lucius.

There is a kindly tone in the reply. As I have said before, Lucius, though profligate, was not stony-hearted. Some critics suppose that the grandchild now mentioned to Lucius is the one formerly mentioned to Marcus. Others think differently. The son of Victorinus, on the testimony of Fronto, died in Germany, where, as is known from other sources, his father was suppressing a rebellion. Hence it is concluded that he was a youth, and fell in battle; but Fronto would surely have referred with pride to this honourable circumstance; and it is much more probable that he had never seen a grandchild of three years than one capable of military service. The boy whom Fronto had in his charge was also a son of Victorinus; but, as he lived to become a consul,[1] it

[1] Naber, p. 181.

cannot be his death that is in question. Finally, although in both letters Fronto refers to the death of his wife and of his grandson, yet in neither letter does he add that the grandson there alluded to was the second recently lost. On this matter I have met with assertions, but not with arguments. The point is of little importance, except as an illustration of how commentators sometimes proceed.

The request of Lucius that Fronto would write the history of the Parthian War, and the reply of Fronto, entitled *Principia Historiae*, now occur. After this three short notes are all that remains of the correspondence between Fronto and the Emperors. In the first Fronto says that, despite the weariness of life occasioned by his ill health, he will not have lived unwillingly or in vain if he lives to see the return of Lucius covered with such great glory. Lucius replies that he imagines the joy of Fronto, and seems daily to see himself embrace him closely and kiss him much. The rest has perished. Afterwards we find him writing Fronto about certain comedians, and naming one whom he is known to have brought back with him to Rome. This brings us to 166, when it is probable that Fronto, who was of advanced age, and who had long been infirm, departed this life.

Chapter IX

FIRST GERMANIC WAR AND DEATH OF LUCIUS

The vices which Lucius had acquired, or developed, when residing in the East, and the independence which he had enjoyed there, made him more dissolute and less circumspect after returning to Rome than he was before departing from it.[1] Upon leaving the table of Marcus he would resort to a tavern which he had installed in his own house, and here he received service from disgraceful persons of all sorts. Sometimes he passed the whole night in gambling. At others he would sup till sleep overtook him on the convivial couch, and he had to be removed on the cushions to his dormitory. By way of change, he would cover up his head with a shabby travelling-hood, and sally forth into the streets at dark to run through the taverns and the brothels, and to mix with sharpers and bullies, in whose quarrels he took part unrecognized, often returning with his face black and blue, and after discovery in taverns where he had gone to hide. As concerns sport, gladiators enlivened his feasts with their contests. He was passionately fond of the circus, and corresponded freely about it with the provincials. Chariot races were his special delight. The drivers were divided into parties, wearing respectively green, red, white, and blue. Lucius had a strong preference for "the greens."[2] In the end, because he favoured "the greens" most disgracefully,

[1] Cap. Ver. 8.

[2] Tavern et cetera. Ver. 4, 5.

the supporters of "the blues," their principal rivals, used to cover him with abuse as he was conducting the spectacle with Marcus by his side.[1] Under his favourite colour he had a horse named Volucer, of which he caused a golden image to be made to carry about with him. He gave instructions for the animal to be fed with raisins and almonds instead of barley, and to be brought into the palace in purple trappings. Upon its death he had it interred at the Vatican.[2]

His expenses were fabulous. He built himself a magnificent villa on the Clodian Way, where he spent days with his friends in debauches involving the wildest luxury. There is the record of a banquet at which, for the first time, twelve sat down instead of the seven usually composing the quorum on such occasions. The repast was sumptuous, and splendid presents, the same in kind, were made to each of the guests. These gifts included a handsome cup-bearer and a carver; a service of plate, a collection of living creatures, beasts and birds, of the different kinds served at table; the cups of rare glass renewed at the several courses of wine; goblets of gold and of silver, richly bejewelled; wreaths of untimely flowers, held together with golden bands, and worn as crowns; golden vases of alabastrian shape, filled with precious perfumes; and finally, for the return home, chariots drawn by mules with yokes of silver. This distraction cost six million sesterces, or £46,875 of our money. When Marcus heard about it he is said to have groaned, deploring such extravagance as a public calamity.[3] Lucius, who cannot have been devoid of humour, asked him to become his guest. Marcus accepted the invitation in the confidence of reclaiming his host by the exhibition of virtuous habits. He spent

[1] *Ib.* 6. [2] *Ib.* 6. [3] Villa and feast. Cap. VER. 9, 5.

fifteen days at the famous villa, occupied continually in the discharge of his multifarious duties, while Lucius passed the time in feasting and preparing feasts. Indeed, since his return from the East, he failed to show the same deference as before for his venerable colleague. He did many things on his own responsibility, and he allowed himself to be influenced by worthless people.

A mob of players, pipers, clowns, and jugglers, whom he valued as much as though they were vanquished monarchs destined to enhance his triumph, had accompanied him from Syria to Rome, and now enjoyed his confidence and patronage. Of this disreputable tribe he preferred two comedians, Maximus and Memphis, to whom he gave the names Paris and Apolaustus, regarding the latter in particular as a sort of Parthian trophy.[1] Besides this, he had a great liking for freedmen of bad character. He indulged them in scandalous ways and gave them undeserved promotion. Among his favourites of this class were Geminas, Agaclytus, Codes, Eclectus, and others. Upon the death of their benefactor all these, excepting Eclectus, were dismissed with compensations by Marcus, whose son Commodus afterwards fell in the conspiracy of the one retained. To Agaclytus Lucius gave in marriage the widow of Libo, a cousin of Marcus, who had sent him as legate to Syria, where he assumed a tone beyond his rank, and died suddenly; whence some, though not Marcus, suspected that Lucius had made away with him. This marriage displeased Marcus, who did not attend it.[2]

As the conduct of Lucius both in public and in private life was so much at variance with that of Marcus, a rumour of disagreements between them got abroad. But this was unfounded, for Marcus resolutely dissem-

[1] Visit et cetera. *Ib.* 8.

[2] Cap. VER. 9.

bled the faults of Lucius, pretending not to see them; and when dissimulation was impossible he supported him by making the best defence possible under the circumstances. It is even said that he never reprehended him.[1] This policy of refusing to see involved the policy of refusing to interfere. The course thus adopted has an important bearing upon the reputation of Marcus. For, as his conduct towards Lucius was the same as his conduct towards Faustina, the fact that no suspicion of bad motive exists in the matter of Lucius strongly tends to allay any such suspicion in the matter of Faustina.

We now come to an event which interrupted the joys of Lucius and increased the cares of Marcus. This was a serious outbreak of hostilities on the northern frontier of the empire. There were disturbances in that quarter during the Parthian campaign, but the local commanders had skilfully avoided extensive operations in order to allow time for the completion of the other war.[2] The most formidable enemies were the Marcomans, a Germanic tribe. Originally, they formed part of the Suevian agglomeration, and inhabited the district between the Rhine and the Main; but, being defeated by Drusus, brother of Tiberius, they seized the country of the Celtic Bojians, now called Bohemia, and extended their dominion along the banks of the Danube almost to Ratisbon.[3] The importance of the Marcomans, by reason of their locality and of their valour, has often caused writers to name the expeditions of the Romans in Central Europe at this period Marcomanic Wars; but Germanic Wars is the better name, because they affected Germans of different tribes. In his Life of Verus, Capitolinus designates the present affair *bellum Germanicum*;[4]

[1] *Ib.* 4; M. Ant. 15.
[2] Cap. M. Ant. 12.
[3] Tacitus, Ger. 42.
[4] Cap. Ver. 9.

while Dio says that for his exploits in the northern parts Marcus received the title *Germanicus*,[1] because they were inhabited by Germans.

The struggle lasted in some form or other for thirteen years, from 167 to 180; but there were three distinct periods when it was acute—to wit, the campaign under Marcus and Lucius, 167–169; the one under Marcus, 170–175; and the one under Marcus and Commodus, 177–180. At the time now in question the Marcomans and their neighbours the Victovales, crossing the Danube, invaded territory subject to Rome, and drove out the inhabitants. These, in their despair, threatened to join the invaders unless the Romans admitted them into Italy.[2] The province chiefly affected by this invasion was Pannonia, which extended over an area bounded on the north by the Danube, on the south by the Adriatic, on the east by a part of the Balkans, and on the west by the Tyrol. The capital was Sirmium (now Mitrowicz), a city on the Save in Slavonia. This district became the base of all the operations conducted by Marcus in his Germanic Wars, and a better one could not have been chosen. The present danger was not limited to the loss of the province, but extended to Italy, which was threatened with an inundation of barbarians similar to that which had devastated it when the cackling of the sacred geese saved the Capitol from the attack of the Gauls. This state of affairs made it advisable for one of the Emperors to preside over the operations. But Marcus, knowing how careless Lucius had been in conducting the Parthian War and how dissolute he was since his return, feared either to entrust him with the new campaign or to leave him behind at Rome. He therefore persuaded the

[1] lxxi, 3. [2] Cap. M. Ant. 14.

Senate that both he and his colleague were required at the front.[1]

The prospect of this war excited so much alarm that Marcus employed all the artifices which religion has devised to restore confidence at such times. Priests were summoned from all parts. Foreign ceremonies were enlisted. Rome was purified with every kind of expiatory sacrifice. The lectisternian rites, which consisted of presenting eatables to the images of the gods arranged on cushions in the streets, were celebrated for a week.[2] Those who remember how the Spanish army was sent out to the disastrous campaign in Cuba with all sorts of pious mummery and holy trappings need not smile at the precautions of Marcus, which, at any rate, were not derided by the turn of events.

Simultaneously with these preparations, the country was ravaged by a terrific plague, which had accompanied Lucius to every place that he visited in returning from the East. It was said that the golden ark in the temple of Apollo at Babylon having been struck by a soldier, a pestilential breath escaped from it, and spread over Parthia and the whole world. At Rome many thousands perished, including a great number of the aristocracy, and the dead bodies had to be removed in waggons.[3]

The two Emperors departed in their robes of war, and reached Aquileia on the Adriatic, not far from Trieste. It was a famous city, well fortified and provided with manifold attractions. Lucius found it so much to his taste that he felt little inclined to make a further advance. He spent the time pleasantly in riding and feasting, and left business to the care of his colleague. Meanwhile the situation was improving. The approach of the two Emperors had caused several

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 12; Ver. 9. [2] Cap. M. Ant. 13.
[3] *Ib.* 13; Ver. 8.

kings to retreat and to slay the authors of the insurrection. The Quades, who had lost their monarch, professed a willingness to consult the Romans in appointing his successor. Several others sought pardon from the imperial legates for their defection. These circumstances, together with the fact that the Romans had lost Furius Victorinus, commander of the imperial guard, made Lucius suggest that they should abandon hostilities and return. Marcus, however, thinking that the retreat and the concessions of the enemy were due to a desire of avoiding imminent ruin, held that a further advance was necessary. Hence they passed the Julian Alps, and took all the measures necessary for the defence of Italy and of Illyria, the modern Dalmatia and Albania.[1]

The above events cannot have occupied a full year, for the Emperors had not departed before January 1, A.D. 167, the day when Lucius entered upon his third consulate ; and they must have returned before January 25, A.D. 168, the day when Marcus delivered at Rome to the imperial guard a certain speech cited by Ulpian the jurist. Indeed, some time or other in the very year A.D. 167, a medal of the kind used to celebrate the return of emperors had been struck.[2] Capitolinus, who confuses this homeward journey with a later and more tragic one, says that Lucius, tired of the advance, became increasingly wishful to get back to Rome, or at any rate to Aquileia.[3]

The peace or truce did not last long. For the next year a renewal of hostilities by the northern tribes caused a second departure of the two Emperors. Their purpose, it seems, was to pass the winter at Aquileia in collecting troops for an advance the next spring. But

[1] Depart. et cetera. Cap. M. ANT. 14.
[2] Des Vergers, pp. 66, 67. [3] M. ANT. 14.

this massing of men occasioned a further extension of the plague, which had not ceased its ravages. Galen, the celebrated physician, was brought to the camp, alas with little or no success. His stay there was short, and he went back to Rome, where Marcus entrusted him with the special care of his son Commodus, and where he himself devoted his leisure to the writing of medical works. In one of these, entitled *De compositione medicatorum per genera*, he says that for the right treatment of wounds an accurate knowledge of the human frame is very necessary; and that although there were medical men then in the army, yet for want of adequate studies they treated their patients more in the manner of butchers than of chirurgeons. This, he adds, is specially regrettable, because the wars in Germany afford such numerous opportunities of dissecting the corpses of the barbarians, and of thus acquiring a knowledge of the human frame.[1]

How long the Emperors remained in camp, or why they left it, cannot be determined. But they set out for Rome at some time inferably near the middle of that winter, and in any case later than December 10, the date when Lucius entered upon his ninth and last tribunate. All went well until they had reached Venetia, and were between Corcordia and Altinum, when Lucius became suddenly ill as they sat together in the chariot. After being taken down and cupped, he was removed to Altinum, where he died three days later without having recovered speech.[2] Capitolinus, Eutropius, Victor (Epit.), and Orosius say that Lucius died of apoplexy;

[1] Des Vergers, pp. 68, 69. He refers the departure to A.D. 169, but this date would not have allowed time for the succession of the proximate events. In a note he gives some valuable and very interesting information concerning the medical department of the Roman Army.

[2] Incident. Cap. M. Ant. 14; Ver. 9.

and this statement is rendered highly probable by his having long pursued conduct very apt to produce this malady, and by his having had to be cupped freely on a previous occasion. But there were suspicions that he had met his death by foul play. Capitolinus mentions that Faustina was said to have had him poisoned, either because of his betraying to her daughter, his wife, a criminal intimacy which he had had with herself, or because she had learned from his freedman Agaclytus that he designed to murder her husband. The same authority also declares that many impute the death of Lucius to his being poisoned by his wife Lucilla, because of his attachment to his sister Fabia, whom Lucilla and her mother detested.[1] As Lucilla afterwards attempted to have her own brother murdered, the real crime may have caused an imaginary one to be imputed.[2] Finally, Capitolinus, and also Victor (CAES.), relate, with emphatic repudiation, a story to the effect that Marcus, after smearing a knife with poison, cut a sow's womb therewith into two parts, and gave Lucius the one which the poison had touched. Victor adds that purposely only the sow's womb was there, and that Marcus, in accordance with the custom among friends, ate his part before serving Lucius.[3] Here would, indeed, have been a case of Abel slaying Cain, and of Jesus betraying Judas with a kiss.

Another version, says Capitolinus, was that Marcus procured the death of Lucius through Posidippus, the doctor, who is said to have cupped him indiscreetly. Dio asserts that Lucius was inflated with pride by the success of the Parthian War, and that, having, "as it is said," conspired against Marcus, he was poisoned before

[1] Cap. VER. 10. [2] Lamp. COM. 4; Dio, lxxii, 24.
[3] Cap. M. ANT. 15; VER. 11. The above dish (*vulva*) was beloved by the Romans.

he effected anything.[1] Thus, though Dio mentions the poisoning and connects it with the charge of conspiracy, he does not mention the person responsible for having it done. Hence it is uncertain whether the version he reports is that which attributed the deed to Marcus or that which attributed it to Faustina. M. des Vergers says that Dio appears to accuse Marcus of the deed ;[2] but, as I have indicated, the wording of the passage conceals the identity of the supposed culprit, and bases the fact itself upon a vague "it is said." Moreover, when subsequently affirming that Marcus himself was slain by poison, Dio adds the words "as I know certainly,"[3] which is a much stronger mode of expression than he used with regard to what caused the death of Lucius.

Finally, had Dio suspected Marcus of poisoning Lucius, we should never have had the passage where Dio says of Marcus: "He indeed abstained from all vices, and committed no faults, either voluntarily or involuntarily."[4] There is nothing mysterious about the affair, because, as I said before, the conduct which Lucius pursued renders extremely probable the statement that he died from apoplexy. Besides this, the whole life of Marcus is opposed to the belief that he committed the treacherous and cowardly deed here in question. As Victor says, only a mind prone to crime could believe such a thing. Certainly the story of the knife and the sow's womb is very precise, and its details would not readily be invented by most people. But exact and ingenious liars have existed in this world, as GULLIVER'S TRAVELS proves beyond doubt. Moreover, in the case of legends the tendency is to become more explicit and detailed as time passes. No one who has

[1] lxxi, 2. [2] P. 73. [3] lxxi, 33. [4] lxxi, 34.

studied the Four Gospels closely can doubt this fact for a moment. Hence the precision of a tale in its final shape, so far from being a proof of veracity, occasions suspicion in all cases where the simplest conceivable form of the narrative is improbable.

As respects the intervention attributed to Faustina, the bad things that she did would be very likely to get her credited with others that she had not done. It will be seen later on that she was accused of interfering in politics with an intention directly opposite to that of which she is here suspected. The worse the reputation of a person is, the more cautiously should any accusation against that person be admitted!

Lucius died in his thirty-ninth year.[1] His body was

[1] From evidence adduced in the fourteenth note to the first chapter it appears that Lucius was born on December 15, 130. Capitolinus, the deponent there cited, also says of him: "Vixit annis quadraginta duobus. Imperavit cum fratre annis undecim" (VER. 11.) Eutropius has: "Cum obisset undecimo imperii anno, inter deos relatus est" (viii, 5). Victor has: "Undecimo imperii anno extinctus est" (EPIT. 16). Capitolinus, who refers the birth of Lucius to 130, makes him die at the age of forty-two, and therefore in 172; and, moreover, he confirms this date by saying that it was the eleventh year of the joint reign of Lucius and Marcus, which is known to have begun shortly after the death of Titus Antoninus on March 7, 161. Eutropius and Victor, in the places cited, affirm that Lucius died in the eleventh year of his reign, which would end in the spring of 172; and thus they agree with Capitolinus as to the year when the death occurred. The Chronicle of Eusebius, however (p. 386), in a preserved fragment of the original text, says: Λούκιος αὐτοκράτωρ ἐννάτῳ τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ ἔτει ἐτελεύτησεν. The Latin translator of the Armenian version has "Lucius Imperator obit postquam annis novem regnaverat." Thus the text puts the death between the imperial anniversary of 168 and that of 169, while the translation makes it succeed that of the latter year. The difference is of the same kind as that between Capitolinus and his two successors. Modern authorities usually refer the death of Lucius to 169. A writer in NOTES AND QUERIES [12. S. XI, July 29, 1929] quotes from Stein's article on Ceionius in Pauly's REAL-ENCYCLOPÄDIE (1899) the following words: "Dying in his ninth tribuneship, he [Verus] must have died some time between December 10, 168,

brought to Rome, and interred, like that of his father, in the mausoleum of Hadrian. His family and kinsfolk received promotions and emoluments. He himself was proclaimed a god. All divine honours were decreed, and a guild was formed to conduct the appropriate worship. These things Marcus accomplished.[1]

A brief notice respecting the appearance and the character of Lucius may not be unwelcome. I have before me a page with wood-cuts representing the heads of forty-nine Roman emperors from Caesar to Constantine inclusive, stamped on coins or medals of their respective periods. Of these monarchs some are grotesque and many insignificant, but a few have good features. It is probable that the fair sex would find Lucius the most attractive of the group. The head is nobly posed ; the hair curly and opulent ; the profile longish but remarkably well cut ; the eye supercilious and proud ; the ear delicately formed ; the whole air and look that of an impressionable, mercurial, and withal fastidious man. It is said that he was tall, and had blond locks which he used to sprinkle with gold dust to make them shimmer in the sun.[2] He possessed a taste for letters ; but his ambition was greater than his talent. In youth he cultivated poetry, in later life oratory ; and it has been rather cruelly doubted whether he should be esteemed a better orator than poet, or a worse poet than orator.[3] He was simple in his manners, and knew no dissimulation.[4] His vices were prodigality, gluttony, inebriety, and lasciviousness. In these respects he is comparable

and December 9, 169." The same correspondent adds : "Stein discusses the point somewhat minutely, and concludes that the death took place in the beginning of February, 169." Liebenham puts the death of Verus at the beginning of February A.D. 169, which is no doubt correct. P. 108.

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 15, 20.
[2] Cap. Ver. 10.
[3] *Ib.* 2.
[4] *Ib.* 1.

with the worst of his predecessors and successors ; but the absence of cruelty is a point greatly to his advantage,[1] as most of the others exhibited this odious disposition to a frightful degree.

[1] *Ib.* 10. *Verus posterior nihil dignum praeter clementiam in moribus habuerit.* Spart. AELIUS VER. 6. Lampridius, recording the particular characteristic ascribed by tradition to Titus, Lucius, and Marcus respectively, gives in the case of Lucius kindheartedness, saying *in Vero bonitas* (DIAD. 7).

Chapter X

THE SECOND GERMANIC WAR

Hypocrisy itself would hardly have ventured to describe the death of Lucius as a calamity, and there were certain aspects in which it might even be regarded as a benefit. In returning thanks to the Senate for the apotheosis of his late colleague, Marcus touched discreetly upon this delicate point. He let it be understood that his were the measures which led to the defeat of the Parthians, and that his reign properly began from the present moment, a somewhat remissful coadjutor being no longer at his side. These observations were received with so much sympathy that the Senate appeared to bless Lucius for his timely departure.[1] The wicked, when told that for them there is no peace, may often feel consoled by casting a glance in the direction of the righteous. The troubles and the cares of Marcus, which had gone on ever since he came to the throne, now began to increase with alarming rapidity. Spain was devastated by the Moors, and Egypt became the prey of brigands.[2] Then all the numerous tribes from Illyria to Gaul, and others still further to the East, formed a conspiracy against the Romans.[3] The plague had reduced the civil population, and it had all but destroyed

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 20. [2] *Ib.* 21.

[3] *Ib.* 22. He has Marcomanni, Narisci, Hermunduri, et Quadi, Suevi, Sarmatae, Latringes, et Buri; hi aliique, cum Victovalis, Sosibes, Sicobotes, Rhoxolani, Bastanae, Alani, Peucini, Costoboci. Eutropius (viii, 6) and Orosius (vii, 15) add Vandali; and Victor (Caes. 16) says the league was under King Marcomarus.

the army. To repair this terrible loss Marcus, following the precedent of the Carthaginian times, enrolled the slaves, whom he curiously named volunteers. He also enlisted the gladiators, the robbers of Dalmatia and of Dardania, and the natives of Phrygia. He even went so far as to purchase German auxiliaries to fight against their countrymen.

These measures involved great expenditure, and therefore, to save the public purse, Marcus sold his private effects. The sale took place by auction in Trajan's forum and lasted two months. Among the articles thus disposed of were the imperial ornaments, the gold embroidered silks of the Empress, the royal vases, goblets of rare glass and of gold, statues and pictures by great masters, and a large collection of precious stones inherited from Hadrian. The proceeds of this transaction were so vast that after Marcus had brought the war to an end he made known to the buyers that whosoever wished might return his purchases and receive his money. Neither those who consented nor those who refused suffered any injury.[1]

The commanders in Spain were left to deal with the Moors, and Avidius Cassius was despatched against the Egyptian bandits. Both of these affairs ended successfully for the Romans.[2] The task of Cassius was not so facile as might have appeared. For the original disturbers of the peace had finally brought the whole country into revolt under a priest named Isodoros, who defeated the Roman troops, and, but for Cassius, would have taken Alexandria. Indeed, Cassius himself feared to venture a battle, and suppressed the rebellion by artfully spreading dissension among the rebels.[3]

When the recruiting and the other preparations were

[1] Recruitment et cetera. Cap. M. Ant. 21, 17; Eutrop. viii, 6; Vic. Epit. 16. [2] Cap. M. Ant. 21. [3] Dio, lxxi, 4.

finished Marcus set off against the northern tribes. The time of his departure is approximately ascertainable. Certain medals of the year A.D. 169 bear the inscription *Profectio Augusti*, the use of the singular proving that on the occasion in question only one emperor, and not two or more emperors, departed.[1] Lucius had then been dead probably for several months, but certainly not for a year, because within that conventional period of mourning his widow, Lucilla, the daughter of Marcus, had re-married at her father's command shortly before he left for the front.[2] Another domestic incident that closely preceded the departure of Marcus was the death of his son Verus, aged seven years, which occurred during the festivities in honour of Jupiter.[3] The date of these, as I said previously, was at the discretion of the Government, and they used always to be given before the consuls departed. This event, in view of the chronological notices touching the death of Lucius and the remarriage of Lucilla, is assignable to the autumn of A.D. 169, the year when the above medals appeared. Probably the intention of Marcus was his former design to winter in Aquileia. The present campaign, like the others, is very imperfectly recorded. But it is certain that Marcus himself conducted the operations along the Ister, as the Upper Danube from the Save onwards was then called, and that he confided those in the West to his generals, Pertinax and Pompeianus.[4] The frontiers, whether of the Roman provinces or of the barbarian territories, can only be approximately discovered. But besides Pannonia, before referred to, the Romans held Dacia (now Roumania) and Moesia (the modern Servia and Bulgaria); while the chief races opposed to them were located as follows: the Marcomans in Bohemia,

[1] Des Vergers, p. 73.
[2] Cap. M. Ant. 20.
[3] *Ib.* 21.
[4] Dio, lxxi, 3.

the Quades in Moravia and part of Hungary, the Sarmatians in Lower Russia and Poland, and the Iazyges, or Jazyges (a Sarmatian variation), at the mouths of the Danube and away upwards along the banks of the river. Of all these the Marcomans appear to have been the most capable ; but the Sarmatians, a rude and swinish people, were the greatest in number. The Celtic, Germanic, and Slavonic elements had become largely intermingled, especially in Pannonia, those wild hordes having often changed their domicile in consequence of famines, wars, and other accidents.

The superior intelligence of the Romans and their long experience had enabled them to make great advances in military science ; but it would be a considerable mistake to imagine that they had anything like the advantage over their barbarous foes which the civilized nations of to-day possess in the same case. The use of firearms, to say nothing of more recent inventions, has made an immense difference. Valour and numbers and bodily strength, which of themselves alone count so little against modern armaments, were still formidable at that day, and in their frequent struggles against one another the barbarians had learned many warlike devices, particularly those best suited to the natural features of their repective lands. The mere fact that they made such long resistance and so often renewed hostilities proves their force, and thus abates the wonder of their final victory.

During the present war Marcus again had his base in Pannonia.[1] Westwards his generals won important victories. The Celts who had invaded Italy were repulsed, and it is said that armed women were found among their dead.[2] In Switzerland and Southern Ger-

[1] Dio, lxxi, 3. [2] *Ib.*

many the provinces of Rhaetia and Noricum were recovered by Pertinax,[1] for which Marcus gave him the consulate, much to the disgust of the patricians, who contemned his lowly origin, and greeted his appointment by quoting a verse from Euripides which says :—

Behold the effects of this terrible war.[2]

The Emperor himself had a severer struggle. His constitution was frail and his health infirm. In the beginning the cold afflicted him greatly. Before addressing the assembled troops he used to retire for a little nourishment, and he always took some in the night. At daytime he would have nothing but an antidote prescribed for him by Galen, the celebrated physician, and this he valued less for its original purpose than because he found that it relieved the weakness of his breast and stomach, and enabled him to resist his other infirmities. The courtiers, either from conviction or from complacency, took the same medicine.[3] Dio says that Marcus had several combats of importance with the Iazyges and the Marcomans, and that he ran many risks. Capitolinus refers to a great victory over the Marcomans at the Danube,[4] while Dio relates another over the Iazyges upon the same river. This occurred as follows : The Iazyges, being defeated by the Romans on land, fled to the frozen Danube in the belief that if they were pursued thither they could turn the defeat into victory, because of their being used to the ice, to which the Romans were unaccustomed. When the foe arrived they came upon them back and front with horses trained not to slide. But the Romans, undaunted by the peril, pressed themselves together, putting their shields on the ground, and each setting his foot on his

[1] Cap. Per. 2.
[2] Dio, lxxi, 22.
[3] *Ib.* lxxi, 6 ; note 3.
[4] M. Aut. 21.

shield to stay himself. Thus massed, they received the shock of the enemy, seizing them as best they could, and overturning horses and men in a hand-to-hand struggle. All the combatants then lost their balance, but the Romans, when they fell backwards, dragged down their enemies at the same time, and, turning them over with their feet, like wrestlers, got atop of them, and when they fell forwards they seized with their teeth those upon whom they had fallen face to face. The Iazyges, being unfamiliar with this way of fighting, and having only light arms, could not resist ; and, although greatly superior in numbers, very few escaped.[1]

Against the Quades, Marcus had a striking but fortuitous success. At a spot destitute of water his army was surrounded and attacked by overwhelming multitudes. These, having encountered a brave resistance, withdrew to the hills, which they fortified, thinking that heat and drought would suffice to give them the victory. The Romans, of whom many were wounded and all were perishing from thirst, could neither advance nor retreat. Suddenly clouds appeared, followed by a teeming shower. At first they caught the water in their mouths, then in their helmets, drinking and giving their horses to drink. While thus occupied they were again attacked, and many a soldier's blood reddened what he drank. The violence of the attack and the confusion of the moment rendered the defeat of the sufferers apparently inevitable, when all at once a terrific storm of hail and lightning fell upon the assailants, but missed their victims. Probably it caught those who were swarming down from the hills, and thus caused a panic among those engaged in the contest. The Quades yielded in terror, and Marcus treated them with compassion.[2]

[1] lxxi, 7. [2] Dio, lxxi, 8.

In such an age such an event was sure to receive a supernatural interpretation. Dio says it was attributed to the enchantments of an Egyptian sorcerer named Arnuphis, who invoked various genies, especially the Aerial Mercury.[1] Capitolinus, evidently alluding to the occurrence, declares that the prayers of Marcus obtained water for his soldiers.[2] The column raised to Marcus by the Senate makes Jupiter Pluvius the benefactor. The Christians, however, pretended that one of the legions engaged was composed of their brethren, who, with the consent of Marcus, offered prayers, and thereby obtained the benefit with his lasting favour and indulgence, the body to which they belonged being ever after known as the Thundering Legion.[3] But since Marcus subsequently treated the Christians with great severity, and since the legion in question had long possessed the title "thundering," this epithet, however adequate to describe that band of heroes, is certainly no less suited to qualify the only name proper for the above story of their prayerful intervention.[4] Medals struck in honour of the present victory refer to the twenty-eighth tribunate of Marcus, and therefore to the year A.D. 174. Other medals of the period bear the inscription *Adventus Augusti*, which seems to indicate that he visited Rome the same year.[5]

One or two minor, but still noteworthy, incidents of this campaign have been recorded. After a certain victory, the Roman soldiers demanded additional pay, which Marcus refused, saying this would only bleed their parents and kinsfolk, and that God alone decided the fate

[1] *Ib.* 8. [2] M. Ant. 24.

[3] Xiphilin, abridger of Dio, lxxi, 9, and notes.

[4] Des Vergers [pp. 92, 93] shows that the XII Legion was the one concerned. In A.D. 70 it took part in the siege of Jerusalem, and thereupon it was sent into garrison at Melitene. The following inscription to one of its chief centurions is dated from the eleventh year of Nero [A.D. 65]: *Aulus Instuleius Tenax primipilarius leg. XII Fulminatae.* [5] Des Vergers, pp. 90, 91.

of the empire.[1] Upon a defeat in which Marinius Vindex, the prefect [of the imperial guard], was slain, Marcus showed his justice and his confidence by erecting three statues to the fallen leader of the vanquished host.[2] Once a youthful enemy who had been taken prisoner, and who was brought to Marcus for examination, said boldly : "The cold prevents me from replying. If, then, thou wouldest know anything, bid them give me a garment." We are left to suppose that his wish was granted.[3] Another time a Roman soldier, acting as sentinel on the bank of the Danube, heard the cries of some comrades who were prisoners on the opposite shore. Whereupon he swam over as he was, and rescued them.[4] Marcus himself gave a noble example of endurance, for, although his friends often besought him to leave the war and return to Rome, he persistently refused.[5] Even after the principal operations were finished and the various enemies began to yield, he remained a long time in Pannonia, receiving submissions, settling terms, attending eventualities, and establishing security. More than once he had to punish tribes who broke their word, or put off its fulfilment ; and when at last a distant affair rendered his departure expedient he was so far from having effected a complete subjugation as to be under the necessity of making renunciations and concessions.[6] The Quades, who had not only assisted the Iazyges in the present struggle, but had also afforded refuge for the Marcomans when escaping from the Romans on former occasions, seem to have

[1] Dio, lxxi, 3.

[2] *Ib.* Des Vergers [p. 88] says that this is an example of a new honour invented by Marcus to recompense gallant commanders, whether or no they survived their heroic contests. The statues were erected at the metropolis in the forum of Trajan or in one of the temples. He mentions that Bassaeus Rufus, successor of Vindex, had the same reward.

[3] Dio, lxxi, 5.

[4] *Ib.*

[5] Cap. M. Ant. 22.

[6] *Ib.* 24 ; Dio, lxxi, 17.

been the first to demand peace. They received it on condition of abandoning the Marcomans, of furnishing horses and cattle, and of returning the deserters and the captives, about 13,000 at once, and the rest afterwards. Besides this it was stipulated that they should not hold markets in common with their former allies, nor admit them into their land, lest they should spy upon the Romans and lay in supplies for future hostilities. The Quades did not keep these terms. They delivered few of the captives, and mostly such as they could neither sell nor use. When any better ones were returned, their kinsfolk were retained to draw them back. Besides this the Quades deposed Furtios, their King, and appointed one Ariogaesos in his place. Marcus, considering that they had violated the treaty, would not renew it, though they affirmed their readiness to give up 50,000 captives. He also offered a thousand gold pieces for Ariogaesos alive, and five hundred for him dead. This was the severest thing that Marcus ever did. However, when the man was captured he only relegated him to Alexandria—a most agreeable exile.[1]

The Marcomans also sent an embassy. After fulfilling, hardly and tardily, the imposed conditions, they were granted half the adjoining territory, subject to the restriction of keeping about five miles from the Danube. Times and places of trading were assigned, and hostages exchanged. Subsequently the Marcomans and the Quades complained that garrisons established in their countries, 20,000 men in each case, caused great inconvenience and impoverishment, and the Quades threatened that, unless relieved of this burden, they would emigrate in mass to their neighbours, the Semnons. But Marcus prevented the emigration by blocking the roads with

[1] Dio, lxxi, 11, 13, 14.

troops.[1] The Iazyges, applying for peace, were at first refused, because of the deception practised by the Quades. Formerly they had put their King in irons for wishing to make terms. Now, however, all their chiefs came for the purpose. Finally they obtained the same conditions as the Quades and the Marcomans, excepting that they should keep twice as far away from the Danube. Marcus had thought of crushing them completely because of their strength, and of their injurious resistance. As regards captives alone, the number of 100,000 was still in their hands, after all that had died, escaped, or gone into slavery. They surrendered immediately 8,000, of whom Marcus sent 5,500 into Britain. Subsequently the Iazyges, being unable to support the conditions, applied for relief; and Marcus, having found them useful and being unwilling to estrange them, granted their requests on all points excepting those relating to meetings, commerce, the use of their own vessels, and the occupation of islands in the Danube. He also gave them the right to cross Dacia to trade with the Roxolans on getting permission from the governor of that province.[2] Neither the Iazyges nor the Burres would consent to assist the Romans without an assurance from Marcus that he would push the war right to the end, being afraid lest they might be exposed, as before, to trouble with their neighbours if he should make a treaty with the Quades.[3]

Disagreeable occurrences interrupted the process of settlement. The Astinges came into Dacia, hoping to receive lands and money for their alliance; but, being disappointed, they left their wives and children with Clemens (the governor?), and departed to attack the Costuboces. Having conquered them, they returned and

[1] Dio, lxxi, 15, 20. [2] *Ib.* 13, 16, 18, 19. [3] *Ib.* 18.

ravaged Dacia. But the Dancriges, fearing for their own land, fell upon them unawares and vanquished them. After this the Astinges again sought the alliance of the Romans, demanding land and offering assistance. The Cotinians made similar proposals, and took Tarrutenius Paternus, Latin secretary of Marcus, for their chief, also pretending to join the Romans against the Marcomans. But instead they ill treated and finally murdered Paternus.[1] Others acted more loyally. Battarios, a prince twelve years of age, sold the services of his tribe to clear Dacia from the hordes of Tarbos, his neighbour, who had gone there to extort money, and the bargain was faithfully executed.[2]

From the various enemies who submitted or were conquered many persons, including captives and deserters, were transported, receiving lands in Pannonia, Mysia, Germany, and Italy. But, as some who had been put at Ravenna made insurrection, Marcus allowed no more to be sent into Italy, and even removed those installed there.[3] Dio says that in all these transactions Marcus evinced great tact and discrimination, treating the different peoples on their merits, granting to some Roman citizenship; to others, immunity; and to others, again, temporary or perpetual remission of tribute, or even subsidies.[4] There is no doubt that most of the arrangements made at this period were tentative and provisory. Marcus knew that his lenient treatment of the barbarians would justify him in treating them more severely if they should abuse his patience; and that, as their submission was involuntary, it would not be lasting. Hence all he needed was to wait till they should give him excuse for incorporating them in the empire. He would certainly have accomplished this had not restriction of time com-

[1] Dio, lxxi, 12. [2] *Ib.* 11. [3] *Ib.* 11. [4] *Ib.* 19.

pelled him to forgo his intentions and to grant easier terms.

While the above events were in process, and probably not long after they had commenced, an incident which occurred at Sirmium, where Marcus had fixed his headquarters, afforded him a striking opportunity of displaying his character. Herodes Atticus, whose proud and tyrannical disposition had got him into trouble many years previously, came across the brothers Quintilius, two chivalrous men, who occupied together the proconsulate of Greece. The Athenians, indignant at the violence of Herodes, called the Proconsuls into the Common Assembly, told them their grievance, and begged them to lay it before the Emperor. The Proconsuls, having compassion on the people, hastened to fulfil this request. But Herodes, who detested them, pretended that they had used guile and stirred up the Athenians against him. Soon afterwards, when Demostratus and several others censured Herodes for his conduct, he summoned them before the praetor on the charge of malicious incitement. They, however, slipped off secretly to Marcus, relying upon his "more democratic" tendency, and upon the fact that he suspected Herodes of complicity in the designs which he had attributed to his [late] colleague, Lucius Verus. They installed themselves near the imperial domicile, and received free nourishment from the Emperor, who often inquired after their wants. This was not only because of his personal sympathy, but also because of his desire to please Faustina and their little girl. The tiny one, whose tongue still lisped, used to put her arms round her father's knee, and beg him with gentle caresses "to save the Athenians." Meanwhile Herodes himself appeared upon the scene, accompanied by two marriageable girls, twin sisters, of great beauty, whom he had

adopted. Outside the city he took a house garnished with towers. In one of these the maidens slept, and on a certain night the lightning struck them dead. This calamity drove Herodes almost mad, and when he came for trial before the Emperor he was destitute of self-control and was longing to die.

Instead of presenting the orderly defence expected from such a man, he began by abusing his august judge, exclaiming: "This is all that I get for the entertainment of Lucius, whom thou didst send unto me. Thus dost thou judge me, and sacrifice me to thy wife and thy three-years-old child." Hereupon he was threatened with death by Bassaeus, who held the Emperor's sword. Turning to him, he said: "Good fellow, an old man fears little more!" and then he left the court, thus renouncing the opportunity of his own defence.

Marcus, who during this painful scene had neither raised an eyebrow nor changed countenance, said: "Defend yourselves, Athenians, although Herodes did not permit it." At first he listened unmoved to the speakers, but when they read depositions in which Herodes was accused of trying to corrupt the Proconsuls by offering them a quantity of honey he exclaimed: "Oh, the bitter honey"; and again, as the tale went on from bad to worse, "Happy he who dies of the plague"; till at last he burst openly into tears.

Herodes himself was not condemned, and his freedmen who were included with him in the charge received the lightest possible punishment; one of them, Alcimedon, father of the girls killed by lightning, being exempted on the ground of his having suffered enough already.[1]

[1] Philostratus, SOPHISTS, ii, 1 (11). He says that the brothers Quintilius were natives of Troy, and that Herodes, referring to the favour which they enjoyed from Marcus, once said: "I blame even the Homeric Zeus for favouring the Trojans."

Chapter XI

THE REBELLION OF AVIDIUS CASSIUS

The troubles at the end of the second Germanic War were approaching a final settlement, and Marcomania and Sarmatia were on the point of being made provinces of the empire,[1] when an event happened which interrupted these proceedings and obliged Marcus to leave the front. Avidius Cassius, after establishing peace in Egypt, returned to Syria, and there proclaimed himself Emperor.[2] Dio says that, expecting the death of her husband, and fearing thereby to lose her position, Faustina had persuaded Cassius to hold himself ready to marry her and to seize the empire in case Marcus should die; and that, hearing this contingency had occurred, Cassius assumed the imperial rank without awaiting confirmation of the report, and without retiring upon its denial.[3] Capitolinus and Gallicanus say that some accuse Faustina of prompting Cassius from despair of her husband's health, and Gallicanus adds that they believe her to have favoured Cassius for the sake of her children. He also cites Marius Maximus as authority for the charge against Faustina, but he protests that it is a calumny. Capitolinus mentions some as declaring that Cassius acted on a false report of the death of Marcus, and that he proclaimed him a god before proclaiming himself Emperor, while Gallicanus refers to others as mentioning that Cassius invented the above

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 24. [2] *Ib.*; Gal. Avid. Cas. 7. [3] lxxi, 22.

report to avoid the scruples of his men.[1] There is no doubt that Cassius had long aspired to the throne. Lucius suspected him in his day. Afterwards, when a flatterer compared Cassius to Catilina, Cassius replied that he would be a Catilina if he should destroy "the dialogist."[2] It seems to have been the case of an ambitious person identifying his ambition with the public welfare. He was a strong man with strong methods, and he mistook the delicacy and the leniency of his master for weakness. In a letter to his son-in-law, written during the brief period of his usurpation, he says :—

> Miserable is the republic that suffers the rich and those desirous of riches. Marcus indeed is the best of men ; but, because he likes to be called clement, he suffers those to live whose life he disapproves of. Where is Lucius Cassius whose name we bear? Where is that Cato the Censor? Where is all the discipline of our forefathers? It perished long ago, and now it is not even inquired after. Marcus Antoninus philosophizes, and discourses about clemency, the soul, nobility, and justice ; but he takes no account of the Republic. Thou seest what a need there is for swords and for indictments, that the Republic may be brought back to its ancient state. I indeed [will attend] to those presidents of provinces ! Shall I call them proconsuls and presidents, who think that they have received the provinces from the Senate and from Antoninus in order that they may luxuriate and become rich? Thou hast heard of that prefect of our philosopher, who three days before his appointment was poor and a beggar, and then suddenly became rich? Whence, I pray thee, but from the bowels of the Republic and the spoils of the provinces? Let them be rich ; let them be increased in goods ; they will cram the

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 24. [2] Gal. Avid. Cas. 1, 3.

treasury, provided the gods favour the right part. May the Cassians restore liberty to the Republic.[1]

All the peoples east of the Taurus range joined Cassius in his revolt,[2] and the army of Bithynia would have gone over to him but for the skill and the determination of its commander, Clodius Albinus.[3] The news of the rebellion was brought to Marcus by the couriers of Martius Verus, the famous general, then governor of Cappadocia.[4] According to Gallicanus, Marcus was not greatly vexed at the event,[5] and according to Capitolinus he was not sufficiently moved by it;[6] but Dio, searching for dramatic effect, makes it put Marcus into a panic, and adds that, in consequence of this, he called his son Commodus from Rome to receive the virile toga at the front.[7] Capitolinus mentions this visit of Commodus, but without mentioning the rebellion as its cause; he adds, however, that on receiving the toga Commodus was designated Consul, though under the proper age.[8] Lampridius asserts that Commodus left for Germany on May 19, and received the toga on July 7, at the time when Cassius forsook Marcus, and when Piso and Julianus were Consuls [175].[9]

Commodus would then be passing his fourteenth year. In looks he was a youth likely to please soldiers, and therefore Marcus acted wisely in showing his men that he possessed an heir whom they could feel proud of. The action proves confidence, not fear. When rumours about Cassius reached the camp of Marcus, and his troups began to hold confabulations, he read them the following speech :—

[1] *Ib.* 14. [2] Dio, lxxi, 23. [3] Cap. Albin. 6.
[4] Gal. Avid. Cas. 9; Dio, lxxi, 23; Des Vergers, p. 98 note.
[5] Avid. Cas. 7. [6] M. Ant. 24. [7] lxxi, 22. [8] M. Ant. 22.
[9] Com. 2. He adds later (12) that Commodus set off on May 19. Liebenham gives A.D. 175 as the year when Piso and Julianus held the consulate (p. 24).

I have come hither, fellow soldiers, not angry but rather lamenting. For why be wroth at the deity to whom all things are lawful? Still, perhaps it is meet that the unjustly wretched should complain, which now happens to me. Is it not terrible that we should be brought together by wars out of wars? Is it not strange to be joined together in civil war? Does it not surpass both these in horror and in strangeness that there is nothing to rely upon in men; but that I am conspired against by my [chief] friend, and set at strife unwillingly, having neither injured nor wronged? For what virtue, what friendship, will be thought safe, I suffering these things? Is not faith dead, and good hope also dead? Still, if I alone were in danger, I would account the thing next to nothing (for I am not immortal), but since it is a popular defection, or rather an insurrection, and the war touches all of us equally, I would like, if it were possible, to summon Cassius and to discuss fairly with him before you or before the Senate; and I would gladly give him the dominion without contest if this appeared to subserve the common good. For in behalf of the common good I support continually both labours and perils, and have spent so long a time here out of Italy, a man already old and also weak, and unable to take either food without sorrow or sleep without cares. Since, however, Cassius would surely never be willing to sit with me unto this end (for how could he trust me, having been thus unfaithful towards me?), it behoves you, fellow soldiers, to have good courage. For Cilicians, and Syrians, and Jews, and Egyptians were never stronger than you, and never will be; not if they numbered as many ten thousands more than you as they now are less. Indeed, even Cassius himself, although he is reputed to be a very good general, and to have achieved many things, does not now appear worthy of any account, for an eagle leading jays, or a lion leading roes, is unworthy

of fear. It was not Cassius, but you yourselves, that accomplished both the Arabian and that Parthian War. Besides, if this man is renowned because of his exploits against the Parthians, ye yourselves have Verus who won no fewer, but even more, battles than he did, and gained more territory. But perchance he hath already repented, having heard that I am alive; for surely he did this thing not otherwise than as if I had been dead. Even should he persist still more, yet when he hears that we are approaching he will assuredly hesitate, fearing you, and respecting me. I, fellow soldiers, —for the whole truth shall be told you—have apprehended but one misfortune, whether indeed he himself may kill himself, being ashamed to come into our sight, or some one else, learning that I am at hand, and hastening against him, may do this thing. For my great prize both of the war and of the victory, even such as no man ever took, would be snatched away from me. What, then, is this? To forgive a man that wronged me, to remain a friend to one that violated friendship, to continue faithful to one that broke faith. Perchance these words seem strange to you. But you need not disbelieve them. For sincerely all good principles have not died out of men, but there is still among us a remnant of the ancient virtue. Should any one, however, disbelieve, then verily for me the desire is stronger that what no one believes can be done, this same [every one] may see accomplished. For I should gain this one thing out of the present evils if I were able to arrange the matter well, and to show to all men that it is possible to use even civil wars rightly.[1]

This speech is very pertinent. Moreover, it evinces the simplicity and goodness of heart which Marcus displays in his MEDITATIONS, together with the lack of

[1] Dio, lxxi, 23–26.

ease and fluency correctly noted by Mr. Long as characteristic of that work. Being read, the address must have existed in manuscript, and the great esteem felt for Marcus would be likely to ensure both the preservation of the original and the multiplication of copies. The very mixed composition of the Roman army at that day adequately explains the use of Greek instead of Latin. Indeed, we are told that once, when Marcus spoke to some one in Latin without being understood by him or any other hearer, the prefect of the imperial guard said in excuse: "Most likely, Caesar, this man does not understand your words; he does not know Greek."[1]

Dio says that during the rebellion neither Marcus nor Cassius applied to each other, either in speech or in writing, any term of abuse, and that the only reproach which Marcus employed towards Cassius was that of ingratitude.[2] The Senate declared Cassius a public enemy, and confiscated his property, placing it in the treasury, as Marcus refused to have it. Terror prevailed at Rome, because it was thought that, Marcus being absent, Cassius might appear, and then avenge the confiscation of his goods by pillaging the city.[3] Capitolinus declares that Marcus set out against Cassius.[4] Dio asserts that while Marcus was preparing for the civil war he heard that Cassius had been slain,[5] and Gallicanus adduces letters which prove that Marcus instead of proceeding to the East returned to Italy, and then learned the fate of Cassius.[6] This correspondence is as follows:—

I. Marcus to Faustina:—

[Lucius] Verus was right when he wrote me to

[1] *Excerpta Vat.* Dio, lxxi, 5 note.
[2] Dio, lxxi, 27.
[3] Gal. Avid. Cas. 7.
[4] Cap. M. Ant. 25.
[5] lxxi, 27.
[6] Avid. Cas. 9, 10, 11.

say that Avidius Cassius desired the empire. For I think thou wilt have heard what is reported of him by the couriers of [Martius] Verus. Come therefore to Albanum, so that, the gods being willing, we may discuss everything. Fear nothing.

II. Faustina to Marcus :—

I myself will come to Albanum to-morrow. I will come shortly. But already I implore that, if thou lovest thy children, thou wilt pursue those rebels to the uttermost. For both soldiers and leaders have got evil ways, and unless they are crushed they will crush.

III. Faustina to Marcus :—

In the revolt of Celsus, my mother, Faustina, besought her husband, thy father, Pius, that he would not show less piety to his relatives than to strangers. Thou knowest the age of our dear Commodus. Pompeianus, our son-in-law, is an old man and a stranger. See what thou doest about Avidius Cassius and his accomplices. Spare not men who have not spared thee, nor would spare me and our children if they should conquer. I myself will follow thy way shortly. I could not come to Formiae because our Fadilla was ill. If I do not find thee at Formiae, I will follow on to Capua, which city will benefit my health and that of our children. I beg that thou wilt send Soterida, the doctor, to Formiae. I have no confidence in Pisthius, who does not know how to cure a young virgin. Calpurnius gave me the sealed letters. If I delay to set off, I will reply to them by Caelius, the old eunuch whom thou knowest to be a faithful man. To him will I confide what the wife, the sons, and the son-in-law of Cassius are said to be throwing out about thee.

IV. Marcus to Faustina :—

Thou indeed, my Faustina, dost act religiously towards thy husband and towards thy children.

> For I have re-read thy letter at Formiae in which thou exhortest me to take vengeance on the accomplices of Cassius. However, I will spare his children, his son-in-law, and his wife. I will write to the Senate that there be no graver conscription, nor severer punishment. For there is nothing that commends a Roman emperor to the nations more than clemency. This made Caesar a god. This consecrated Augustus. This especially adorned thy father with the name Pius. Finally, if the war had turned out according to my wish, Cassius would not have been slain. Be at peace therefore, for the gods protect me, for they have my piety at heart. I have designated our Pompeianus consul for the following year.[1]

Gallicanus maintains very reasonably that this correspondence delivers Faustina from suspicion of complicity with Cassius. Had both her letters been written after she knew that his rebellion was being suppressed, the hostility of her sentiments towards him might well have been attributed to hypocrisy; but, as the first epistle obviously dates from a time anterior to the suppression, it is evident that, had she favoured Cassius, her interest would not have been to incite Marcus against him as she therein attempts with great violence, and this fact gives credit to the same sentiments in her second epistle. There are several other points of the correspondence that deserve notice. For instance, it is quite clear from the first letter of the series that, when sending for Commodus, Marcus had not told Faustina that he needed him on account of the disturbance raised by

[1] *Pompeianum nostrum.* Liebenham has "176. T. Pomponius Proclus Vitrasius Polio II." In 173 Titus Claudius Pompeianus was consul for the second time, and his name does not figure again on the consular list (Liebenham). In 175 he might be nominated consul for the next year, and yet not fill the office, although actually he long survived that date.

Cassius. But, if this were his reason, he might not allude to it either because he was taking a provisionary measure, on unconfirmed rumours, or because he desired to spare the maternal feelings of his wife. The same letter proves the still more remarkable fact that, since learning the revolt of Cassius, he had not written to Faustina, unless he had written to her without mentioning the event. Moreover, as he gives the information voluntarily and not in reply to an inquiry, it is evident that she had not asked him for the news. It is impossible to suppose that Marcus long displayed such reserve, or that Faustina long exhibited such indifference. Dio says that Marcus sent for Commodus because of having heard that Cassius had revolted, and Lampridius declares that Commodus set off on May 19. Hence, if we suppose that Verus immediately dispatched the news to Marcus, that Marcus immediately summoned Commodus, and that Commodus immediately departed, we may (allowing for delays on the different journeys) assume that a month elapsed between the report of Verus and the departure of Commodus. As it would take some days for the news to reach Verus in Cappadocia, we may refer the proclamation of Cassius to the middle of April. Hence, as Dio says that the dream of Cassius lasted three months and six days, it is reasonable to infer that it ended early in the last quarter of July. Moreover, as Commodus received the toga at the front on July 7, there would be time for Marcus to leave there and to reach Albanum before the end of that month. The news of the death of Cassius could easily have been brought to him within three weeks. Thus it is a fair conclusion that the first two letters were written at the beginning of August, and the last two towards the middle thereof. The pressure of business and the incidents of travel would explain why Marcus had not

corresponded with Faustina upon the subject at an earlier date.

Finally, it should be observed that in the first of these four letters Marcus reports the defection of Cassius, and invites Faustina to join himself at Albanum (now Albano), fourteen miles south-east of Rome; that in the third Faustina talks of joining him at Formiae (now Mola di Gaeta), some forty-six miles north-west of Naples, or else at Capua, nineteen miles north of that city; and that in the fourth Marcus refers to Cassius as being dead, and speaks as if he himself were still on a journey. Accepting this evidence, we have not only the certainty that he did not take the field against Cassius, but also the probability that he did not go to Rome before learning the death of Cassius. Had he resembled other men, the presumption would have been that he wished to leave to the Senate the odium of enacting any severe measures apparently necessary, and to reserve to himself the popularity of abating these enactments at a favourable moment. But, in view of his exceptional character, it is far more likely either that he desired to ascertain the pleasure of the gods with respect to his retaining or losing the empire, or else that he felt absolutely confident of their protection. The latter alternative is the more acceptable.

In the second letter to Faustina, Marcus expresses this confidence, and subsequently, when asked "What if Cassius had conquered?," he replied: "We have not so worshipped the gods, nor so lived that he might have conquered us." After which he declared that all murdered princes had for some reason or other deserved their fate, instancing Nero, Caligula, Otho, and Vitellius, and adding that neither Augustus, Trajan, Hadrian, nor his own relative Pius could be overcome by rebels, of whom many had perished without the will

or even the knowledge of their intended victims.[1] According to Dio, Avidius Cassius ended in the following manner. One day, as he was walking, a certain centurion named Antonius, in riding by, struck him on the neck. As the wound was not severe, and as the striker was carried onwards by his own impetus, Cassius might have escaped but for the murderous intervention of a decurion, whose name has not survived. The two men cut off his head, and departed with it for the Emperor's quarters. But on hearing of the event Marcus was so afflicted that he ordered the head to be buried before it reached his presence.[2] Dio is firmly convinced that the traitor would not have been executed had he survived his capture.[3] Gallicanus says it was clear to all that Marcus would have saved Cassius had he been able. He adds that Marcus grieved over the unpresented opportunity of showing mercy, saying he would have had Cassius taken alive, to reproach him by his kindness, and to spare him.[4] Capitolinus asserts that the death of Cassius pained Marcus especially because, as he said, he had desired to pass through his reign without the shedding of any senator's blood.[5] Against the will of Marcus, the army slew the man who had clothed Cassius in the purple, and who had received from him on that account the command of the royal guard.[6] They also slew Marcianus, son of Cassius, and governor of Alexandria, who had joined in his father's revolt, Marcus being in this case both unwilling and unwitting.[7] Upon hearing that the rebellion had collapsed, Marcus gave orders to show the rebels mercy. This is evident from the second of the two surviving letters that he wrote to Faustina about the conspiracy. Therein he declares his intention to spare the relatives of Avidius

[1] Gal. Avid. Cas. 8. [2] lxxi, 27, 28. [3] *Ib.* 30. [4] Avid. Cas. 7, 8.
[5] M. Ant. 25. [6] Gal. Avid. Cas. 7. [7] Cap. M. Ant. 25.

Cassius, and to write the Senate instructions to desist from any further measures of a punitive nature. The document here referred to is extant. It begins by announcing the designation of Claudius Pompeianus to the consulate, which had been mentioned in the letter to Faustina. Then it proceeds thus :—

> As to what regards the Cassian defection, I beg and beseech you, conscript fathers, that, laying aside your censure, ye will give heed to my clemency and piety, or rather to your own. Let the Senate kill no one. Let none of the senators be punished. Let not the blood of any noble be shed. Let the exiled return, and let the proscribed receive their goods. Would that I could recall many from the lower world. Nothing is more displeasing in an emperor than vengeance for his sufferings, which, the juster it is, the severer it appears. Wherefore give pardon to the sons of Avidius Cassius, to his son-in-law, and to his wife. And why do I call it pardon, since they have done nothing amiss? Let them therefore live in safety, knowing that they live under Marcus. Let them live, having their share of the paternal goods. Let them enjoy gold and silver and garments. Let them be rich, let them be secure ; let them be free, with full liberty to travel at their pleasure ; and, whithersoever they go, let them bear about with them the evidence of my piety and of yours. Nor is it a remarkable clemency, conscript fathers, to give pardon to the children and to the wives of the proscribed : I seek, indeed, from you that the accomplices who belong to the senatorial and to the knightly order shall be saved from slaughter, proscription, fear, infamy, envy, and in fine from every kind of vengeance. Grant this in my time that he who falls in a tumult in the cause of tyranny may be thought worthy to have been slain.[1]

[1] Gal. Avid. Cas. 12, 13. The fine turn at the end of the

When this letter was read before the Senate the members expressed their admiration of its sentiments by the sing-song iterations which perhaps suggested the litanies of the Church, saying :—

> Pius Antoninus, may the gods preserve thee! Clement Antoninus, may the gods preserve thee! Thou wast unwilling to do that which was permissible ; we have done that which was befitting. For Commodus we demand complete sovereignty. Confirm thy offspring, make thy children safe. No violence harms a good rule. For Commodus Antoninus we demand the tribunitian power. We demand thy presence. Hail to thy philosophy, thy endurance, thy learning, thy nobleness, and thy innocence. Thou subduest the rebels, thou overcomest the foe. May the gods protect thee.[1]

In accordance with the desire of Marcus, the punishments given were extremely lenient. Heliodorus, a son of Cassius, was deported, while Alexandra, a daughter of Cassius, and her husband Drucianus, or Druntianus, were allowed entire freedom of movement. All the sons of Cassius received the half (or more) of their patrimony ; and besides this a subsidy of gold and of silver was given to them, and also to his daughters, who had in addition a present of jewellery. Marcus placed the whole family under the protection of one who was his uncle by marriage. Thus they lived, not as descendants of a conspirator, but in the security of the senatorial order. He also forbade their domestic misfortune to be thrown at them in law courts, and certain persons who insulted them were condemned.[2]

epistle is oddly missed by the French translator, who renders *detisque hoc meis temporibus, ut in causa tyrannidis, qui in tumultu cecidit, probetur occisus*, thus : *et permettez que l'on puisse dire que, sous mon empire dans une cause de rébellion il n'a péri personne, si ce n'est dans le tumulte des armes.*

[1] Gal. Avid. Cas. 13. [2] Cap. M. Ant. 26 ; Gal. Avid. Cas. 9.

After his death, however, his son Commodus had them all burned alive as though they had just been caught in the act of rebellion.[1] As regards the rest of the conspirators and their families, the following details have survived. Marcus did not punish any senator in any way, and, instead of bringing suspected senators before his judgment seat, he handed them over to the Senate, as if they had been accused of some other offence, appointing the day for their trial. He punished a small number of citizens, guilty not only of favouring Cassius but also of particular crimes. Flavius Calvesius, governor of Egypt, instead of being executed and having his goods confiscated, was simply banished to an island, and the inculpatory documents relating to him were burned. Pardon was given to the citizens implicated in his disaffection.[2] All the rebels escaped capital punishment, excepting a very small number of centurions who may have been held responsible for special acts of violence. Some persons were exiled, but with the liberty of choosing their residence and of having a part of their goods. Moreover, it is said that the exiles were recalled.[3]

[1] Gal. Avid. Cas. 13. [2] Dio, lxxi, 28.
[3] Gal. Avid. Cas. 9; Cap. M. Ant. 25, 26.

Chapter XII

EASTERN JOURNEY OF MARCUS—DEATH OF FAUSTINA—ELEVATION OF COMMODUS

Thinking that it would be wise to visit the provinces which had shared in the late rebellion, Marcus departed for the purpose with Faustina and Commodus. The following notices indicate the route. Lampridius says that Commodus went with his father "to Syria and Egypt."[1] Capitolinus asserts that Faustina died at Halala [in Lycia];[2] and Dio states that her death occurred on the way to Syria.[3] Capitolinus adds that "on betaking himself to Syria" Marcus did not then visit Antioch, but did so later on.[4] Next he makes him go to Egypt;[5] while Ammianus Marcellinus speaks of his going there through Palestine.[6] Finally, Dio and Capitolinus bring him to Athens before taking him back to Rome.[7] Hence I infer that he came from Italy to Asia Minor, probably by sea; thence to Syria, probably by land; thence through Palestine to Egypt; thence back to Syria; and thence to Greece.

According to this view of the journey, it would not be long after his departure that Marcus, on reaching Halala, a village of Lycia, at the foot of the Taurus range, sustained the loss of Faustina. Capitolinus says that her death was the result of a sudden illness.[8] Dio is uncertain whether it was caused by gout, from

[1] Com. 2. [2] M. Ant. 26. [3] lxxi, 29.
[4] M. Ant. 25. [5] *Ib.* 26. [6] xxii, 5.
[7] lxxi, 31; M. Ant. 27. [8] M. Ant. 26.

which she suffered, or from suicide, due to the fear that when the papers of Cassius were examined she might be found to have been his accomplice.[1] But as the letters adduced in the preceding chapter vindicate her from the charge of complicity, and as heart disease and apoplexy often accompany gout,[2] the suggestion that she took her life should be discarded. Dio adds that Marcus was greatly afflicted at the death of his wife, and that he addressed to the Senate a letter which said: "May it please the gods that none of you be delivered unto death for my sake, either by my suffrage or by your own"; and which concluded with the threat: "If I do not obtain this favour I will hasten to die."[3] Capitolinus, doubless referring to this letter, states that Marcus, after eulogizing Faustina, requested the Senate to award her [divine] honours and a temple.[4]

Dio reports that in honour of Faustina and Marcus the Senate decreed that statues of silver should be erected to them in the temple of Venus and Rome, and an altar raised therein upon which all the maidens of the city who were about to marry should offer sacrifice with their future husbands; and that whenever Marcus visited the theatre a golden image of Faustina should be brought thither on a curule chair to the place which she formerly occupied, and should be surrounded by the seats of the matrons.[5] Capitolinus adds that Marcus returned thanks to the Senate for deifying Faustina, that he raised the village where she died to the rank of a colony [naming it Faustinopolis], and that he built there a temple to her memory.[6] This fane was despoiled by the Emperor Caracalla (211–217), and was afterwards re-dedicated by his reputed son, Heliogabalus (218–222),

[1] lxxi, 29.
[2] Aitken's SCIENCE AND PRACTICE OF MEDICINE, ii, p. 255.
[3] lxxi, 30. [4] M. ANT. 26. [5] lxxi, 31. [6] M. ANT. 26.

either to himself or to the Syrian Jupiter or to the sun,[1] although the instincts which he displayed might well have inclined him to restore it to its original deity.

M. Des Vergers says that one of the bas-reliefs taken from the arch of Marcus, and still preserved, shows Faustina as she is being carried to heaven by a Fame, while her husband gazes at her departing form with a look full of affection.[2] Whatever his feelings may have been, Marcus could not have taken any other course in this matter without compromising his wife's reputation upon her death, and thus condemning the policy that he had pursued towards her during her life. For, under similar circumstances, his great examplar, Titus Antoninus, had acted in the same way to her mother, Galeria Faustina.[3]

Besides the honours referred to, Marcus, again imitating Titus, commemorated his wife by providing under her name for a number of impecunious maidens. According to the different cases, these virgins were entitled *Faustinas* and *New Faustinas*, and they paid their devotions to the respective ladies, who thus became patronesses of a virtue which they had but little troubled to practise. Of the younger Faustina there still exist medals that bear the word *Pudicitia*[4]—a mad world, my masters!

From Lycia Marcus passed onwards to Syria. Antioch, the capital of this great province, had been the stronghold of Cassius, who won the affections of the people by giving them entertainments and by allowing them every facility of speech and assembly. Marcus, who probably feared the occurrence of incidents that would necessitate sanguinary repression, declined to visit the city. In an address to his friends he exposed

[1] *Ib.* 26; Spart. Car. 9. [2] P. 123. [3] Cap. Ant. P. 6.
[4] Cap. M. Ant. 26 (note 58); Ant. P. 8.

the seditious state of the inhabitants, apparently to justify himself for making an edict depriving the latter of spectacles and other privileges.[1] The correspondence of Cassius was suppressed, either by Marcus himself or by his representative, Martius Verus, who had preceded him into Syria as governor in place of Cassius. It is said that Marcus refused to read the letters because he desired to avoid the danger of hating any one, and that Verus was prepared to take all risks for the sake of screening as many as possible.[2]

From Syria Marcus went through Palestine to Egypt. On the way, being wearied by the perpetual demonstrations of malodorous and tumultuous Jews, he sadly exclaimed: "O Marcomans, O Quades, O Sarmatians! at last I have found others worse than you."[3] On coming to Alexandria, which had also shown Cassius no little favour, he exhibited all the charms of his kindly and indulgent disposition. He forgave every one, and went about everywhere, behaving himself like an ordinary citizen or a travelling philosopher, and visiting the schools and the temples. It is probable that Marcus wintered in Egypt, and that the following incident is referable to this sojourn. Herodes Atticus, who seems not to have heard from Marcus for a good while after the affair at Sirmium, finally sent him a letter. This contained no excuse, but a reproach, for therein Herodes asked how it was that Marcus, from whom he used to receive numerous letters—even as many as three in a day—had kept so long a silence. In reply Marcus wrote a lengthy epistle displaying "an extraordinary

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 25. [2] Dio, lxxi, 29.

[3] Ammianus Marcellinus, xxii, 5. *O Marcomanni, o Quadi, o Sarmatae, tandem alios vobis inertiores inveni.* The term *inertiores* here means "worse to make anything of." Dr. Arnold Bodek (p. 76) puts us on our guard against the Christian sympathies of Marcellinus.

tenderness of disposition." He salutes the old man as "my dear Herodes," and then, after referring to his winter quarters and complaining over the loss of his wife, and over his own infirm health, he proceeds thus:—

> For thee I wish that thou mayest be healthy, and be convinced that I am well inclined towards thee; and that thou shouldst not think thyself injured by me because I condemned and afflicted with the mildest possible penalty some of thy slaves who had transgressed. Be not angry with me on that account. If, however, I have troubled thee, or still trouble thee, then demand from me satisfaction in the temple of Athena at the Mysteries in the city. For, when the war was at its hottest, I vowed to have myself initiated; and fain would I have it come to pass that I be initiated by thee.[1]

This wish appears to have been frustrated. Herodes died of consumption towards the age of seventy-six years, and his death may have occurred before Marcus reached Athens. For we do not hear of any meeting between the two on that occasion. When the time of his departure arrived Marcus gave the Egyptians a proof of his confidence by leaving his daughter in their country.[2]

He next visited Antioch, and then, or somewhat later, he removed the disabilities formerly imposed by him upon the city.[3] It is said that all the places involved in the rebellion of Cassius were forgiven, and that during the whole of his tour Marcus did not inflict on any of the conspirators, great or small, the penalty of death.[4] The restoration of peace throughout the dis-

[1] Philostratus, SOPHISTS, ii, 1 (12). He informs his friend Aspasius that the autographic epistles of Marcus are better than those of the other emperors because "in these letters alongside choiceness of expression the peculiarity of his character is displayed." EPIS. 1.

[2] Cap. M. ANT. 26.

[3] *Ib.* 25; Gal. AVID. CAS. 9.

[4] Cap. M. ANT. 25; Dio, lxxi, 28.

affected provinces was not the only success of this journey. The Oriental potentates who, after the exploits of Cassius in the Parthian War, must have been filled with sad memories and gloomy forebodings by the news of his usurpation, and with great hilarity by the report of his fall, hastened to bring Marcus their felicitations. On these occasions covenants were made or renewed, and peace was more firmly established. Marcus won much affection in the East, and left there numerous traces of his philosophy.[1]

On his way to Athens, and in Athens itself, he showed great respect to the professors of oratory. At Tarsus he went to hear Hermogenes, a native of that city, who, although not more than fifteen years of age, had won great celebrity. Opening his speech, the youth said in a jocular way: "See, Emperor, I come before thee as a speaker who still needs a master; a speaker who has not yet reached man's estate." Marcus was delighted with the oration, and he presented to the orator "great and magnificent gifts." Alas, the early promise of Hermogenes was not fulfilled, for he lived to suffer witticisms about the loss of his "wing-feathers," and to hear a scornful rival say: "This is Hermogenes, who in childhood was an old man, and in old age is a child."[2]

At Smyrna Marcus heard Aristides, whose birthplace was Hadriane, an obscure town in Mysia. Damianus of Ephesus told Philostratus that Marcus, having been three days in Smyrna without making the acquaintance of Aristides, asked the brothers Quintilius if he had not overlooked him among the crowd of those in attendance. Their answer was that they had not seen him, otherwise he would have been presented. Next day they brought him to Marcus, who exclaimed: "Why do we see thee

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 26. [2] Philostratus, Sophists, ii, 7.

so late?" To which Aristides replied: "An object of meditation detained me, my Emperor; and when the spirit is occupied in meditation it may not be withdrawn from that which it seeks." Charmed with this reply, Marcus asked: "When shall I hear thee?" Aristides said: "Set me a theme to-day, and thou shalt hear me to-morrow; for I am not one of those speakers who utter whatever comes into their mouth, but of those who prepare carefully beforehand what they desire to say. Allow, however, my Emperor, that my scholars likewise attend my address." "Be it so, for it is more democratic," answered Marcus. "Grant them also, lord," continued Aristides, "that by calling and clapping they may express their applause as much as they can." "That is your affair," said Marcus smiling. The subject of the address is given differently by different authorities; but they all agree that on this occasion Aristides spoke in a peculiarly vibrating strain.

The beauty of Smyrna attracted the eye of Marcus, and a few years later, when Aristides wrote him a letter pleading for those who were suffering from the destruction of the city by an earthquake, he sighed often in reading the account, and on coming to the place where the writer said, "The evening winds blow o'er her ruins," his tears fell upon the page.[1]

At Athens Marcus regarded it as one of the advantages of the city to hear Hadrian of Tyre, whom he had raised to the didactic chair on the mere strength of his reputation, without having heard him or had him examined. This teacher made an impressive entry, for he began his first discourse by saying: "Once more comes science from Phoenicia." He wore costly garments and splendid jewels, and won the hearts of his scholars

[1] Philos. SOPHISTS, ii, 9 (1, 2).

by sharing with them in their banquets and games. Some imitated his voice, others his gait, and others his dress ; while in after years many wept as they recalled him to memory. But these devoted ones got him into serious trouble by causing their slaves to thrash a truculent fellow whose abuse he himself had suffered and despised. For the man persisted in drinking unmixed wine when laid up from the thrashing, and thus died in a month's time. Hadrian was accused of the casualty, but was acquitted on the protestations of the young men, reinforced by the testimony of the doctor. Marcus set Hadrian a theme, and displayed his satisfaction with the treatment by overloading him with distinctions and presents. The former included board, seat of honour at public games, freedom from taxation and from priestly duties, to say nothing of all else likely to gain him repute, while among the presents were gold, silver, horses, slaves, and whatever betrays wealth. The same favours were extended to his whole family.[1]

Perhaps, although the fact is not stated, Marcus while then at Athens also heard the orator Theodotus, the first teacher of Athenian youth, to whom he allotted the definite sum of ten thousand drachmas (£381 5s.) for his services. He charged Herodes Atticus to examine the professors of Platonic, Stoic, and even of Epicurean philosophy ; but he appointed Theodotus on his own responsibility, determined, as in the subsequent case of Hadrian, only by the celebrity of the man. Theodotus held the position of Archon, or head of the people, in Athens, and sincerely or otherwise he had opposed the proceedings of Herodes Atticus, whose instruction he once enjoyed.[2]

[1] Philo. SOPHISTS, ii, 10 (1, 4).

[2] *Ib.* ii, 2. It is worth while to mention here Alexander of Seleucia in Cilicia. His father was professor of forensic eloquence, and his

While at Athens, when visiting the temples Marcus entered that of Ceres, and went alone into the sanctuary. His purpose in doing this was to prove his perfect innocence,[1] for none might enter therein before making an appalling adjuration of purity. Dio asserts that Marcus was initiated at Athens,[2] and this evidently means that he was initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries which related to Ceres, who was therein worshipped under the name of Demeter in connection with her search for Persephone, her daughter. The rites were peculiarly sacred and protected by terrific oaths. Death was the penalty inflicted on any uninitiated person who witnessed them, or any initiated person who divulged them. They were divided into the Lesser and the Greater Mysteries. The Lesser occurred in February at Agrae on the Ilissus; the Greater from September 15 to 23, partly at Athens and partly at Eleusis, where they had first been instituted. Initiates of the Lesser were called *Mystae*; those of the Greater, *Epoptae*. A year at least separated the first from the second initiation. This took place at Eleusis on the night between the sixth and the seventh day of the festival. Although

mother was a famous beauty. He resembled the former in facility of speech, and the latter in comeliness of feature. On attaining maturity he was sent as ambassador to [Titus?] Antoninus. It was freely reported that he had the habit of trying to make himself look young, and it came to pass that, as the Emperor did not seem to take much notice of him, he exclaimed in a higher tone: "Be attentive to me, Emperor." To which the Emperor replied: "I am attentive, and I know thee. Thou art he that grooms his hair, keeps his teeth shining, polishes his nails, and always smells of cosmetics." Subsequently, when Marcus was campaigning in Pannonia, he called Alexander to be his private secretary for the correspondence in Greek. On his way Alexander rested at Athens, and made a great impression on the Athenians by his beauty and eloquence. He paid a compliment as handsome as himself to Herodes Atticus, for which he received a princely gift. Mists enshroud his later career. Philos. SOPHISTS, ii, 5 (1–3).

[1] Cap. M. ANT. 27. [2] lxxi, 31.

these mysteries lasted about 1,800 years, and although they were practised by thousands upon thousands of persons, their true character never reached the ears of the profane. The doctrines and the important ceremonies are unknown.

Upon the other hand, an encumbering stock of legends arose and has survived. It may be that the great mystery was extremely commonplace, and that the oaths and the penalties were only invented to preserve it from contempt. It is said that in returning to Athens on the seventh day the initiates used to show unmeasured hilarity, and would sit on a certain bridge mocking the passers-by. Who knows what it was that really caused their amusement. Mr. Long says that Marcus was not a superstitious man, and briefly excuses him for this conduct at Athens on the plea of his official position. I think that no one who reads the MEDITATIONS and who knows the circumstances of their author will either doubt the statement or consider the excuse necessary. The Roman government from the earliest times had brought religious faiths and practices into the service of the State. It was held that the gods interested themselves continually in human affairs, and that they made known their will by conventional signs. To win the divine favour, to avert the divine wrath, and to interpret the divine wishes, was the sole business of religion. Sacrifices were ordained to please or to appease the gods, and the science of augury was invented to decipher their intentions. The most important affairs, civil and military, were decided by the pecking of the sacred chickens, and by appearances in the bowels of the victims brought to the altar. It requires no fatiguing effort to perceive what a mighty engine such a system would be in the hands of skilful politicians. We have in our time seen worldly prelates blessing flags and

baptizing cannons, and heard sceptical statesmen join in litanies of supplication and in hymns of triumph—all for the purpose of giving encouragement to the shedding of blood, without which there is no remission of political errors. Let us, then, forget the pullets and the entrails, and pass in silence over the accommodation of a great moralist to the weakness of his subjects.

At Athens, Marcus awarded many honours and gave great encouragement to learning.[1] He returned to Italy by sea, encountering on the voyage a severe storm, his escape from which is celebrated on a medal of the period, bearing the image of a ship with numerous rowers, and the inscription *Felicitati Augusti.* Upon landing at Brundisium he changed his military for civil garments, and ordered his troops to do the same. It is said that under him they never wore this uniform, which of course means that they did not wear it in Italy.[2] On November 27 [A.D. 176] Marcus gave Commodus the title *Imperator* with the tribunitian power, thus making him his colleague as the Senate had previously requested. Gifts to the people and splendid spectacles honoured the occasion. Commodus was then in his sixteenth year.[3] On December 23 [A.D. 176] Marcus and Commodus held a Triumph at Rome, doubtless with respect to the victories of the second Germanic War.[4] In a discourse to the people, probably delivered on this

[1] Dio, lxxi, 31. [2] Cap. M. ANT. 27; Des Vergers, p. 125.

[3] Lamp. COM. 2, 12; Cap. M. ANT. 27. Des Vergers, p. 122, asks if Marcus gave Commodus the tribunitian power before setting out for the East. Liebenham, p. 108, says the duarchy of Marcus and Commodus began November 27, A.D. 176.

[4] Lamp. COM. 12; Cap. M. ANT. 27. Lampridius gives the date twice (2, 12), in each case putting the elevation before the Triumph, and referring both these events to the consulate of Pollio and Aper, which Liebenham places in the year A.D. 176. Capitolinus (16) has the same order; but elsewhere (27) he says that Marcus triumphed at Rome, then went to Lavinium, and then elevated Commodus.

occasion, Marcus asked them how many years he had been away; "Eight," they replied, counting them on their fingers in hope of receiving as many pieces of gold. He gave them two hundred drachmas, which was more than hitherto bestowed. Likewise he remitted all fiscal dues and debts to the treasury from forty-six years without the sixteen years fixed by Hadrian; and gave donations to certain cities, including Smyrna, which had recently suffered in an earthquake.[1]

Somewhat later than this, but still earlier than he had intended, Marcus, under the pressure of public affairs, arranged a marriage for Commodus. The bride was Crispina, daughter of Bruttius Praesens, member of an influential family in Luconia, a district on the south-west coast of Italy, where there has been found an inscription dating from the consulate of Commodus and Quintilius [A.D. 177], and containing good wishes for Crispina, probably on the occasion of her union with Commodus. The ceremony resembled that of private persons, but public benefactions were made as they had been when Commodus received the virile toga, and when he was taken up into the imperial rank.[2]

The fact that Marcus took Commodus for his colleague and indicated him as his successor renders it necessary to examine the character of that young man. Here the first thing that strikes the observer is the absolute difference between the father and the son, both in public and in private life. Indeed, had a novelist or a dramatist introduced two such persons thus closely related by blood, and thus immediately following each other upon the same throne, he would have been despised as a lover of crude and impossible contrasts. But Fate did what no other artist would have ventured

[1] Dio, lxxi, 32. [2] Cap. M. Ant. 27; Des Vergers, p. 132.

to do, and, if the presumed relationship were real, that weird cynic of the ages then surpassed even the most brilliant of his achievements. Commodus was remarkable only for one thing, in which, however, he excelled all other men—to wit, the completeness of his depravity. The worse qualities of the worst emperors were united in his person. He had the revolting madness of Caligula,[1] the exquisite cruelty of Domitian, the vanity and folly of Lucius, the bloodthirstiness of Caracalla, and the bestiality of Heliogabalus. There have been wretches, such as Nero for instance, whose character was relieved by a touch of grace and genius. Commodus was utterly boorish and stupid. Following Dio,[2] some authors pretend that he did not display wickedness during the lifetime of his father, and that he was subsequently led into bad ways by flatterers and evil advisers. But the evidence is all against this pretension. The faults of Commodus are not those that a man eventually learns; they are those that grow inevitably out of his nature.

Besides this, both Lampridius and Capitolinus insist that Commodus exhibited his vile character before Marcus died. According to the former of these authorities, Commodus evinced from the first all sorts of low tastes and vicious habits. In his twelfth year it once happened at Centumcellae that his bath was made too warm, and for this he ordered the bath attendant to be burned alive; but, to save the man, the skin of a goat was burned that his master might be deceived by the stench.[3] Lampridius declares that Marcus had Commodus instructed by excellent teachers and placed under the best guardians, but the depraved youth would

[1] Commodus was born on the anniversary of Caligula's birth, a circumstance not without interest to those who hold the transmigration of souls. Lamp. Com. 10.

[2] lxxii, 2.

[3] Lamp. Com. 1.

choose evil companions, and upon their removal he became so ill that they were restored by the paternal indulgence.[1] From Capitolinus we hear that Commodus showed himself vile and bloody even when his father lived, and that the latter complained of him to his friends two days before his end. Elsewhere he says that Marcus is reported to have wished the death of his son, foreseeing that he would be what he actually became, and fearing, as he himself said, to have him resemble Nero, Caligula, and Domitian.[2] The belief that Marcus foresaw the wickedness of Commodus is expressed by Dio and implied by Julian.[3]

In order to grasp what this prevision really means, it is necessary to be acquainted with certain facts exemplifying the behaviour of Commodus during his reign. But since, beyond doubt, cruelty is by far the most terrible characteristic which an absolute monarch could ever display, I shall restrict the illustrations to this feature, omitting a crowd of loathsome, ridiculous, and despicable traits necessary to complete the portrait of that hideous abortion.

The favourite sport of Commodus was the amphitheatre. He took part in contests against men and against beasts. It is said that he won over a thousand palms for having killed or vanquished as many gladiators.[4] But his renown is somewhat tarnished by the fact that he fraudulently provided his adversaries with harmless swords, while he himself used a blade capable of doing mortal injury. At last, however, an opponent confronted him without any weapon, saying that one was enough for them both. This so alarmed Commodus that he had the man removed, and thenceforth devoted his attention to slaying beasts.[5]

[1] Lamp. Com. 2. [2] M. Ant. 27, 28.
[3] Dio, lxxii, 1; Jul. Caesares. [4] Lamp. Com. 12. [5] Vic. Caes. 17.

Apart from these brutal amusements, Commodus displayed a veritable mania for inflicting pain and death. Seeing a man with grey and black hairs, he ordered a starling to be put upon him to pick out the grey ones in mistake for worms, and thus fill the head with sores.[1] He classified under punning names those deprived of an eye or of a foot by his orders.[2] He dressed up a number of cripples to look like dragons, and then killed them with his arrows.[3] He had the belly of a fat man opened to see the bowels fall out.[4] If any one rashly expressed a wish to die he took him at his word, and, in spite of his remonstrances, caused him to be executed.[5] He slew some for their riches, some for their rank, some for wearing foreign garb, and some for being stately and handsome.[6] Once he ordered a massacre in the amphitheatre because the people there had called him a god, and it sounded like mockery.[7] On another occasion, when he was making a fool of himself in the same place, the senators, following Dio's example, chewed the leaves of their crowns to suppress a laugh which, if observed by their lord, would have ended their lives.[8] The number of persons put to death by his orders was appalling; many of these were executed publicly, but others were secretly poisoned. He was skilled at arranging fictitious conspiracies in order to furnish excuse for getting rid of people whom he disliked or whose money he desired. One of the saddest aspects of these murders was that the slain included almost all the men who had faithfully served his father—as, for instance, the noble brothers Quintilius—and who were his own best servants.[9]

The logic of events finally triumphed, for on Decem-

[1] Lamp. Com. 10. [2] *Ib.* 10. [3] *Ib.* 9; Dio, lxxii, 20.
[4] Lamp. Com. 10. [5] *Ib.* 10.
[6] Dio, lxxii, 7; Lamp, Com. 10. [7] Lamp. Com. 15.
[8] Dio, lxxii, 21. [9] Dio, lxx, 4, 5.

ber 31, 192, in the thirteenth year of his reign and in the thirty-third year of his life, Commodus was assassinated. The Senate proclaimed him a public enemy, and ordered his body to be dragged with a hook and thrown into the Tiber; but Pertinax, the old soldier who succeeded to the throne, had him interred in the mausoleum of Hadrian. Even then there were cries in the Senate that one who had been more cruel than Domitian and more impure than Nero should not rest in the tomb. Finally, however, they were content to throw down his statues and to obliterate his name from the monuments.[1]

The above facts seem to justify the opinion of the pensive bard who declared that "the boy is father of the man"; and they also suggest that when Marcus quite abruptly gave the following short and verbless sketch in his MEDITATIONS he was perhaps in a moment of grief and despair outlining the traits of his frightful son :—

> A black character, a womanish character, a stubborn character, bestial, childish, animal, stupid, counterfeit, scurrilous, fraudulent, tyrannical. (iv, 28.)

Certainly Marcus was in no way responsible for the bad qualities of Commodus, and unquestionably he employed every means to arrest their development; still, the point remains : If he knew, and could not but know, of their existence, why did he leave him in charge of the Empire instead of appointing a suitable person in accordance with the right of adoption as exercised within his own experience by Hadrian and Titus Antoninus? This impressed the Emperor Julian, who, in passing an opinion upon the various Caesars, finds no fault with Marcus except for his grief at losing a

[1] Lamp. COM. 17–20; Dio, lxxii, 22.

wife of little virtue, and for his having imperilled the Empire by transmitting it to his son Commodus instead of to his son-in-law Pompeianus, who would have made an excellent ruler.

Had Commodus given promise of military or administrative success it might have been thought that Marcus regarded him as likely to do more good by his public virtues than harm by his private vices. But neither in youth nor in maturity did Commodus display any of the qualities necessary for a general or an administrator. He made excuses when Marcus, just before his death, urged him to complete the war;[1] and upon that sad event he compromised his father's gains by not pushing even his own victories over the demoralized foe to a decisive issue, and by according peace on too easy terms in order to be at liberty for his amusements.[2] The few trophies won by the Roman arms while he occupied the throne were entirely due to his officers, although he himself, taking the credit thereof, assumed pompous titles and changed the very names of the months in honour of his exploits.[3]

As for public works, he did not even complete those of his father; and the only example of the kind that occurred under him was the erection of a bath in his name by one of his favourites.[4] He entrusted the management of affairs to greedy and oppressive persons of profligate character and base origin. He detested the wise and prudent. When, in consequence of this mismanagement, the cost of necessaries increased enormously, he actually rejoiced, saying that he wished his time to be known as the golden age.[5] These facts

[1] Vic. Epit. 17.
[2] Eutrop. viii, 7; Vic. Caes. 17; Dio, lxxii, 1, 2, 3.
[3] Lamp. Com. 8, 11; Dio, lxxii, 15.
[4] Lamp. Com. 17. [5] *Ib.* 14.

discredit the supposition that Marcus condoned the Neronian tendencies of Commodus because he perceived in him the elements of a future Trajan or Augustus. Certainly, if he observed the bad character of his son at an early date and took him into partnership in the hope of improving him by the imposition of a great task to be performed under his own supervision, then he must have had opportunity to observe the futility of his experiment; while, if he did not discover the ghastly truth till after the partnership, the discovery was sufficient to prove his son's unfitness to rule the Empire. Did he sacrifice the welfare of his land to paternal affection or to the pride of his house? I do not believe it. For to me it seems that he acted towards Commodus just as he acted towards Lucius and towards Faustina and towards Faustina's lovers, and just as he would have acted towards Avidius Cassius had he had the opportunity. Either he resolutely declined to see the worst and blindly hoped for the best, or else he regarded censure as unjust and interference as useless. "If we knew all, we should forgive all," said a great French author; it is extremely probable that Marcus Aurelius Antoninus entertained the same sentiment.

Chapter XIII

MARCUS IN THE TALMUD[1]

During the second century of our era there flourished a famous rabbin named Jehuda and surnamed "the holy." He held the important office of Patriarch at Jerusalem, but attained far higher celebrity by compiling the Mischna, a work which recorded the teaching of the rabbinical sages up to its day, and which initiated the voluminous literature known as the Talmud. According to later Tadmudical writings, some of which are derived from sources existing at or near his time, this rabbin, familiarly called "Rabbi," was the esteemed and trusted friend of a certain Roman Emperor named "Antoninus," or "Antoninus son of Asverus," whom the said writings frequently mention in terms of reverence and affection. The Emperor and the rabbin became acquainted by exchange of letters; then they met each other in the Holy Land, and afterwards they resumed their epistolary intercourse. When the news of the Emperor's death arrived, his venerable friend exclaimed in heart-stricken tones: "The bond is torn asunder."

The question now arises: Who was this "Antoninus"? Six emperors at least bore that name with or without right during the period in which "Rabbi" is said to have flourished. Those are Titus, Marcus, Lucius,[2] Com-

[1] For my authority, Dr. Arnold Bodek, see *Appendix*. In the references B stands for Bodek and p. for page.

[2] Capitolinus (M. Ant. 7) says that Marcus gave Lucius the name "Antoninus"; and Lampridius (Diad. 5) states that Lucius received "Antoninus" as a name and not as a forename; but Liebenham does not record it among the designations of Lucius.

modus, Caracalla, and Heliogabalus.[1] Of these, the first is excluded by the fact that he never visited the East, while the last four are excluded by their character and conduct. For how could Jehuda the holy have been the close friend of the frivolous Lucius, the monstrous Commodus, the bloodthirsty Caracalla, or the beastly Heliogabalus? Because, even supposing that his own instincts had not preserved him from one or another of those incompatible amities, any such friendships would have disgusted his fellow believers and caused them to deprive him of his office without delay.

From the above it might be inferred that Marcus was obviously the Emperor in question. But some very learned and intelligent members of a race which has never lacked either learning or intelligence have held the contrary opinion. At first a certain chronological difficulty was the principal objection alleged. But when deeper research, combined with critical ingenuity of no mean order, had solved that difficulty, more than one famous scholar, while admitting that Marcus and "Rabbi" held their respective positions at the same time, still refused to believe in their friendship, because of the difference in their philosophical and religious convictions. Dr. Grätz, for instance, who was one of the most brilliant among those sons of promise, did not scruple to modify tradition by putting the grandson of "Rabbi" in place of "Rabbi" himself, and Alexander Severus in the place of Marcus, although he did not

[1] Capitolinus, in his Life of Macrinus (3), says that in strict accordance with prophecy eight emperors bore "Antoninus" as their final name. He mentions the above six, and puts Geta and Diadumenus between the fifth and the sixth, thus making the octet. But neither of those two could have been the "Antoninus" of the Talmud. Geta was murdered in his twenty-fourth year, after a conjoint reign of three years. Diadumenus, a promising and very attractive youth, was murdered along with his father Macrinus after they had reigned less than fourteen months.

dispute that "Rabbi" was Patriarch when Marcus was Emperor. But, apart from the violence thus done to tradition, there is the fact that Alexander Severus took the names Marcus Aurelius, but not the name Antoninus, probably because this had been so defiled by his predecessor, Heliogabalus.[1] Besides which certain communications between "Antoninus" and "Rabbi," while pertinent in the case of Marcus, are irrelevant in that of Alexander. Finally, though both pairs were respectable, yet the earlier one surpassed the other by possessing certain noble traits which are attributed to the pair presented in the Talmud.

Taking a hint from Grätz, another Jewish scholar, Zacharias Franckel, imagined the existence of a friendship between "Rabbi" and Lucius Verus, and one between "Rabbi's" grandson and Alexander Severus; but this seems only to complicate matters without yielding any advantage. Dr. Arnold Bodek, who thinks that Marcus Aurelius and Jehuda the holy are the "Antoninus" and "Rabbi" brought together in the Talmud, defends his thesis very skilfully. Here are the facts which he offers. "Rabbi," says the Talmud, was born at the time that R. Akiba died.[2] This event occurred close upon the capture and destruction of Bethar in the disastrous rebellion of the Jews under Bar-Cochba. Jewish sources date the Bethar incident fifty-five years after the fall of Jerusalem, which corresponds to A.D. 125;[3] but Roman sources add ten years,

[1] Lampridius says that Alexander Severus refused the name "Antoninus" when it was offered to him by the Senate (ALEX. SEV. 5). Dr. Bodek declares that Alexander Severus was never called "Antoninus" (p. 33). Liebenham holds the same view (p. 111).

[2] B. KIDDUSCHIN 72*b*; MIDR. RABBA. on GENES. 58; MIDR. KOHELETH i, 4; B. p. 49.

[3] JER. TANNITH iv, ECHA RABBA, p. 71*b*.

thus bringing it down to 135 of the same era. Dr. Bodek thinks that the Jews, having suffered frightfully in connection with the affair, would be more likely than the Romans to remember when it happened, and therefore he accepts the earlier date, hereby assigning 125 as the year of "Rabbi's" birth.[1] At that time circumcision was forbidden by the Romans under penalty of death. But the Patriarch R. Simon ben Gamaliel, father of "Rabbi," nevertheless circumcised him. For this, he with his wife and son were sent prisoners to Rome, where the mother of "Antoninus" exchanged him for "Rabbi," whom she nourished at the breast, while "Rabbi's" mother presented "Antoninus" to the authorities as her child. Happily all turned out well, for by the intercession of the Roman lady the Jewish parents were absolved, and the edict itself was repealed.[2] Dr. Bodek's faith in this story has not even the dimensions of a mustard seed, but he regards it as evidence that a primitive tradition connected "Rabbi" with the particular "Antoninus" who entered this world about that time—to wit, Marcus Aurelius, whose birth, as we know, occurred in the 121st year of our redemption. Alas, when once a tale is set going it usually receives improvements. A canonical gospel connects Jesus with the faithful malefactor, misnamed the penitent thief; and one (or more) of the apocryphal gospels brings the two together during the infancy of the holy child.[3]

The next we hear of "Rabbi" is that he became patriarch upon the death of his father, which, according to the Talmud, happened when the locusts had come into the land and the tribulation was increased.[4] This reference, says Dr. Bodek, points to the calamities

[1] B. pp. 50–54. [2] B. MEILA 17; B. p. 55.
[3] LUKE xxiii, 39–42; EVAN. INFAN. ARAB. 23.
[4] B. SOTA, 49*b*; B. p. 57.

which afflicted the empire soon after Marcus came to the throne, and one of which, as is known from Victor's EPITOME, was the devastation of the most fruitful districts by innumerable swarms of locusts. Dr. Bodek assigns 164 as the date involved, but I fail to see why he should not have taken 162 for the same reasons. He is much more convincing with respect to the time of "Rabbi's" death. In the eighth verse of the eleventh chapter of Zechariah it is said :—

> And I cut off the three shepherds in one month; for my soul was weary of them, and their soul loathed me.

Dr. Bodek, while refraining from quoting this passage, quotes the comment thereupon reproduced in the MIDRASCH JALKUT from the MIDRASCH JELAMDENU, which is as follows :—

> I let the three shepherds vanish in one month; this means that Rabbenu (Jehuda-ha-Nasi), Antoninus, and Artaban, the King of Persia, all died in one month, and to this is universally applied the passage : I let the three shepherds vanish in one month.

Dr. Bodek justly remarks that what impressed the rabbinical sages in this connection was not the simultaneous decease of the two mightiest monarchs then on earth, but the fact that this event coincided with the death of "Rabbi," who was the seventh of his race from Hillel, who himself descended from King David.[1] Commodus Antoninus died right at the end of A.D. 192, while Artaban, known to the Romans as Vologesus III, died on the threshold of the next year. The first of these facts might seem to imply that Commodus was the "Antoninus" of the Talmud; but the implication

[1] J. TANNITH, iv (p. 68); B. p. 55–57.

does not exist, for the work refers also to one "Antoninus the younger."[1] According to the above inference, the death of "Rabbi" occurred near the close of A.D. 192 or the beginning of A.D. 193.

Before examining the intercourse between the patriarch and his imperial friend there is a matter that requires explanation. If the "Antoninus" whom the Talmud exhibits in such close connection with "Rabbi" is Marcus Aurelius, how comes the work to call him "Antoninus son of Asverus"? The father of Marcus was named Annius Verus, and it has been suggested that these two names were corrupted by the Jews into Asverus. Dr. Bodek, who for excellent reasons declines this suggestion, proposes in its stead the following ingenious theory. The Jews used the word "son" very loosely, putting it for grandson, and great or even great-great-grandson, their principle being to point out a man by connecting him with some well-known ancestor. Now, at an early period of his life Marcus bore the name of his mother's grandfather, Catilius Severus.[2] This man was prefect of Palestine under Hadrian,[3] and he is probably identical with the Julius Severus who led Hadrian's forces against the Jews at the revolt of Bar-Cochba.[4] It is probable, therefore, that his name lingered among the chosen people, and that they knew Marcus as his "son." The word "Asverus," says Dr. Bodek, is "Severus" vocally modified in accordance with a known law of the Semitic languages.[5] We come now to the occasion and the details of the intimacy.

Dr. Bodek plausibly conjectures that Marcus, who was meticulously exact in the discharge of his duties, got to know "Rabbi" by corresponding with him as patriarch about matters affecting the Jewish community,

[1] MID. KOH. x, 5; B. p. 68. [2] Cap. M. ANT. 1.
[3] Spart. HAD. 5. [4] Dio, lxix, 13, 14. [5] B. p. 70–73.

and that, having found him an excellent man, he made him one of his friends.[1] It appears that a communication was to be addressed to the Emperor, and that R. Ephes, "Rabbi's" colleague, would have liked to strike a proud note in making it, but that "Rabbi" insisted upon the use of the most modest and courteous terms.[2] Again, during financial straits, such as Marcus is known to have experienced at the beginning of the Germanic wars, the Emperor sent to "Rabbi" for advice. Taking the messenger into the garden, "Rabbi" pulled up certain plants and put others in their stead, thus indicating that a change of fiscal administrators was necessary.[3] Artaban, *alias* Vologesus, unsuccessfully attempted by the costliest presents to draw away "Rabbi" from his allegiance to Rome. Dr. Bodek says that this was during the Cassian insurrection, and that the Jews then remained loyal to the Emperor. But Dio affirms that "Cassius soon ranged all the peoples inside the Taurus under his authority,"[4] and it seems passing strange that Vologesus should favour the imperial designs of Cassius after the terrible injuries done to his kingdom by that implacable conqueror. With diffidence I would suggest that the attempt of "Artaban" to bribe "Rabbi," if it be historical, occurred during the Parthian war. In any case, Dr. Bodek is justified in supposing that the object of such an attempt would be to cause disaffection among the Jewish communities in the other parts of the Empire even more than to corrupt the Jews of Palestine.[5]

On his visit to the Holy Land "Antoninus" exhibits the same simplicity and benevolence that Marcus exhibited on his Eastern journey. He enriched the

[1] B. p. 134, 135. [2] MIDR. RABBA, i, 75; B. p. 136.
[3] MIDR. RABBA, i, 67; B. p. 137.
[4] lxxi, 23. [5] B. p. 137, 138.

Synagogue of Sepphoris, and committed to "Rabbi" a large stretch of land,[1] probably for the support of the High School or its attendants, as "Rabbi" himself needed nothing, being very wealthy. The Emperor frequently met the patriarch, and he was entertained by him at banquets distinguished for their princely splendour. This again agrees with Marcus, who, as Victor and Eutropius declare, liked to see his friends and subjects make such displays on festive occasions.[2] In their more private conversations "Rabbi" and his illustrious friend discoursed on profound themes. Once the Emperor, thinking apparently of the fixed hours of worship established among the Jews, asked if one could not address God at every hour. "Rabbi" said that men would lose their reverence for God if they communed with him in an irregular and arbitrary fashion. This the Emperor could not admit. To bring it home to him, "Rabbi" came very early one morning with his felicitations, and repeated them hour by hour several times, till at last the Emperor, thoroughly tired out, exclaimed: "Is that thy way of saluting thy ruler?" Whereupon "Rabbi" answered: "Seest thou if an earthly king, in order not to be burdened the whole day long, will be saluted only at certain hours, how much more God, the king of kings."[3]

On another occasion the two were discussing the question of responsibility. The Emperor said that at death the body might accuse the soul and the soul accuse the body, and that in this way both could escape punishment. "Rabbi" encountered the objection by relating a story which has since become famous, that of the blind man and the lame man, who in their desire to rob an orchard overcame the hindrance of their

[1] J. Schebiith, vi; B. p. 139. [2] B. p. 139.
[3] Midr. Tanchuma Parascha; B. p. 140.

respective infirmities by agreeing that the lame one should get on the shoulders of the blind one and gather the fruit; after which, when they were captured and accused, each of them apart pleaded his own disability, but in vain, for they were put together again and condemned as one man. This, said "Rabbi," is what God will do with the soul and the body at the judgment.[1] They also discussed the question whether life is first attributable to a human being from birth or while it is still in the womb. "Rabbi" took the former view, but "Antoninus" convinced him of its impossibility.[2] Another point debated between them was: At what period does the germ of consciousness and will appear in man? "Rabbi" put this at the genesis of physical life, and therefore before birth. "Antoninus," on the contrary, put it at birth, because he thought that a living being with independent desires and impulses could not exist inside another being without endangering it. In this case also "Rabbi" came over to the opinion of the Emperor.[3] Dr. Bodek contends that Marcus believed the soul to come into the body at birth, but the passage which he instances from the MEDITATIONS as supporting his contention seems to me against it :—

> Consider what every being is from the seed to the time of its receiving a soul, and from the reception of a soul to its giving back the same. (xii, 24.)

Surely, if Marcus had thought that the soul is introduced into the body at birth, he would not have omitted to say so in this passage. During his stay in Palestine "Antoninus" probably gave attention to jurisprudence, which was a subject that Marcus Aurelius profoundly studied.[4] He cherished the design of elevating Tiberias,

[1] B. SANHEDRIM, 91^a; MIDRA. RABB, iii, 4; B. 141.
[2] B. SAN. 9^b; B. p. 141.
[3] MIDR. RABBA, i, 34; B. p. 142. [4] B. p. 143.

as the seat of a Jewish High School, to the rank of a Roman Colony, which would have given it many privileges, including that of freedom from taxes.[1] Alas, a difficulty that we should never have expected to hear of thwarted this plan. For "Antoninus" is reported to have said: "I would gladly have my son in my place as Caesar, and I would also gladly have made Tiberias a free city; but they will at most grant me one, not both." Thereupon "Rabbi" advised him to get his son named to be Caesar, adding that if this were accomplished the son would be in a position to do something for Tiberias.[2] Here it is plainly a question of the Emperor's abdicating in favour of his son. Dr. Bodek, who ignores this point, says that the original seems to show that this son was not Commodus, but a younger one named Severus, of whom nothing further is known. He says also that the "they" who could not be expected to grant the Emperor both his wishes were the members of the Senate, a body to which Marcus restored their proper powers. Indeed, in his answer to "Rabbi," the Emperor complains that "the nobles of Rome" gave him much trouble.[3]

Besides these discussions relating to philosophical and public matters, "Antoninus" and "Rabbi" spoke of the former's private affairs. The Talmud reports a striking example of this kind which occurred after the friends were separated. A daughter of "Antoninus" had deeply fallen, and her grief-stricken father sought the advice of "Rabbi" about the case. At first he recommended severity, but in the end he favoured mercy. Dr. Bodek observes that the form of correspondence used on the present occasion is remarkable. In proof of this he cites the Hebrew original, and then

[1] B. ABODAH ZARA, 10[a]; B. p. 144–145.
[2] *Ib.* [3] *Ib.* B. p. 146.

adds that the fashion of corresponding by the interchange of symbolical herbs and flowers came from Persia. The name of the erring woman, it appears, was Gera, which Dr. Bodek regards as an orthographical modification of Galera or Galeria. Thus, if she were the child of Marcus, or, at any rate, of his wife Faustina, she was called after her mother's mother, Galeria Faustina, spouse of Titus Antoninus.[1]

According to the Talmud, "Rabbi" conversed not only with the Emperor, but also with one of the Emperor's daughters. This lady figures in the work under the designation of "the third Faustina." She asked "Rabbi" the interesting question: "At what age may a girl get married?" And then, woman like, without awaiting his reply, she went on to tell him that she herself had already entered wedlock in her sixth year, and that she regretted not to have entered it sooner. Dr. Bodek confesses that this sounds very improbable, as the Roman law forbade the marriage of girls under twelve years; but he adds that evidence presented by Friedländer, especially the portion derived from gravestones, shows that, particularly among the upper classes, the above prohibition was not strictly obeyed, and that Roman girls really did get married from the end of their sixth year.[2] The genuineness of this pearl might have been further supported by recalling that Marcus caused his daughter Lucilla to re-marry within the legal period of twelve months,[3] and that he left one of his daughters in Egypt, whither he had come from Palestine.[4]

The reader is justified in demanding my opinion

[1] B. ABODA ZARA, 10*b*; KEREM. CHEMED, iv, p. 218; B. pp. 148, 149.

[2] B. NIDDA, 45*a*; DIGEST, xxiii, 2, 4; Fried. (previously cited, c. iii), i, pp. 268, 324; B. p. 148.

[3] Cap. M. ANT. 20. [4] *Ib.* 26.

respectively to the facts and arguments reported in this chapter. Dr. Bodek insists strongly upon the primitive, universal, and persistent nature of the tradition connecting "Rabbi" with "Antoninus," whom he takes, and in my judgment rightly takes, for Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. Still, in the case of two persons flourishing at the same period, and eminent alike for their responsible positions and their wisdom and goodness, it might happen that some people connected with the one in humbler circumstances thought good to represent him as the friend of his more exalted contemporary, even though the two were but slightly acquainted, or perhaps had never made each other's acquaintance. The spurious correspondence of Paul and Seneca is a case in point. Hence a desire to increase their credit with the Romans, or a simple impulse of vanity, may have caused the Jews to invent the intercourse between the patriarch and the Emperor, or, at any rate, to magnify its intimacy. Therefore, while ready to agree with Dr. Bodek that the conscientiousness of Marcus would be likely to make him correspond officially with the moral and judicial head of a famous race occupying a definite locality in his empire and scattered over many other parts of it, I am inclined to believe with Dr. Grätz that the difference between the political, philosophical, and religious views of Marcus and those of the Jewish patriarch would, in case of such earnest and sincere men as they were, exclude the possibility of an intimate friendship, though a mutual esteem could not but exist. Dr. Bodek strives to overcome this difficulty by insisting upon the liberal education and enlightened sentiments of "Rabbi," in conjunction with the tolerant disposition of Marcus and his accessibility to reason. In particular, he notes the favourable attitude which Marcus displays towards monotheism. But Protestants often feel an

indulgence for Catholics which these do not reciprocate. Thus, even supposing that Marcus felt a sympathy with the monotheistic creed of Judaism, the Jewish patriarch would never be able to view with anything but abhorrence the polytheistic faith which Marcus so devoutly practised. Moreover, although the intercourse between the two men was historical, yet the alleged details of the intercourse might be wholly or mostly fictitious, and I do not think that any unprejudiced person would deny that some of the stories which the Talmud relates about the communications that passed between "Antoninus" and "Rabbi" belong to the category of what Huckleberry Finn calls "the very rottenest sort of tales."

Thus there is no corroborative evidence that Marcus ever thought of putting "his son," or anybody else, "in his place," and he was the last person in the world to escape responsibility by abdicating in favour of a boy. There is also no other record that he ever possessed a son named Severus, but he had one named Verus, who died at the age of seven years, and whose name may have got into the present fib under a wrong form. Again, what probability can we assign to the statement that a Roman at the mature age of Marcus, and with his disposition and education, took part in a correspondence conducted by means of symbolical herbs and flowers, and that he used this childish method in discussing a matter of the gravest importance to the honour of his family?

As regards the story about the bride of six years who regretted the tardiness of her marriage, it is almost as hard to digest as Jonah's whale. It should always be remembered that one of the chief designs of the Talmud was to furnish popular teachers of religion and morals with material adapted for popular instruction. Thus a lesson is often illustrated by or conveyed in an anecdote

about this or that eminent person, or it is set forth through a conversation between two or more famous people. Many of these things are wholly imaginary, and some are partly symbolical. The tendency was to attribute wise words to men celebrated for wisdom, no matter whether the particular sages did or did not utter the particular sayings. It was the same with respect to conduct remarkable either in the good or in the bad sense. Kings, even though anonymous, were found to impress the vulgar when introduced into dialogues or parables. The voice of a rabbin went further than that of a private person. These facts are indisputable, and they afford a measure for the historical value of the Talmud.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the above tales about "Antoninus" seem very like fragments of contemporary gossip suggested by the popular imagination at work upon vague or distorted reports of actual things. The presence of such names as "Gera," "the third Faustina," and "Severus" points to a corrupted acquaintance with real facts. The same applies to what is said about the desire of "Antoninus" to abdicate in favour of his son, and about the answer of the nobles. For these are blundering references to the elevation of Commodus, and to the restoration of the senatorial authority. The facts which thus gave rise to fictions bear unmistakable signs of having reached the story-tellers by oral communications, and not from literary sources. This is interesting because it reveals the possibility that here among the fictions there may be truths elsewhere unobtainable.

Chapter XIV

MARCUS AS RULER, LEGISLATOR, JUDGE, AND BENEFACTOR

The most characteristic feature in the government of Marcus is his attitude towards the Senate. This body was the supreme council of the State. It arose under the Monarchy, flourished under the Republic, and decayed under the Empire. The members had increased from a hundred to a thousand, when Augustus reduced them permanently to six hundred. At first only descendants of certain ancient families were eligible, but later on sons of any free-parents were admissible, after being ennobled. Merit was supposed to be the ground of election. The choice was made originally by a section of the people, then by the consuls and consular tribunes, and finally by the censors, except in rare cases of popular suffrage at critical times. But since Augustus obtained for himself and for his successors consular and tribunitian power, together with the censorship, the emperors possessed the right of choosing senators. The name implies advanced age, and at first this was a condition ; but Augustus made twenty-five years the inferior limit. According to rule, candidates should have passed through all the offices of State. Riches were necessary because Augustus had decreed that no one should be eligible for the office unless he possessed a fortune of at least one million sesterces, a sum equal approximately to £8,000 sterling. Senators could not legally engage in commerce. If they squandered their fortune, or otherwise misbehaved

themselves, they were liable to be excluded from office, the exclusion being effected by the censor omitting their names in calling the list ; but they could be reinstated upon their amendment. They wore a distinctive dress, and enjoyed various privileges.

At first the Senate had no authority to make laws, to appoint magistrates, or to declare either war or peace ; but the emperors, for their own ends, transferred this power to it from popular assemblies. Augustus made it a high court of justice, particularly for crimes against the State and the authorities, formerly dealt with by the people. Consuls, dictators, knights, and tribunes had the right to convoke the Senate ; the emperors procured this for themselves, but they let the others exercise it under their control. By order of Augustus, regular meetings took place on the first and the fifteenth day of each month (except March). The locality was one consecrated by an augur, temples being mostly used. A certain number (400 under Augustus) had to be present to constitute an efficient body, and those absent were fineable. The ceremony began with worship. The consul, or whoever presided, then asked the members their opinion in order of rank. As those called upon had the liberty to speak at pleasure, and even to introduce foreign subjects, measures were often talked out, this being all the more easy because the proceedings closed at sunset. Division was taken by forming two separate groups. Certain present and previous magistrates took part in the voting, but their votes were not counted. On unimportant affairs there was division without debate. The tribunes had a veto, and any member equal in rank to the proposer of a measure could hinder its acceptance ; but rejected measures could be reintroduced. Upon enactment, all were registered and signed.

The emperors gave the senators pompous titles ; but they debased the Senate by choosing unworthy members, and the senators debased themselves by yielding the emperors servile acquiescence. Moreover, as they were wealthy and noble, they nourished aristocratic sympathies, and finally lost all touch with the people. For, although at first chosen from persons who had held offices derived from popular suffrages, they finally obtained the right of appointing these magistrates, and thus gained the opportunity of providing the material to refill their own ranks. The order was at last abolished by the Emperor Justinian (527–565), after an existence of thirteen centuries. The case of the emperors and the Senate shows how liberal forms of government may become means of tyranny if ambitious rulers get them into their hands, and modify them in such a way as to deprive them of power, while leaving them the appearance of liberty. Nevertheless, there is more hope of abolishing a despotism that works under liberal forms than one that works under despotic forms ; because, if power chances to fall into the hands of a liberally-minded man with one or the other of these systems at his disposal, he will be far more inclined to restore that which only needs restoration than to destroy that which needs destruction. It is the wide difference between reform and revolution. While emperors of an autocratic turn sought to load the Senate with nominal prerogatives, Marcus Antoninus attempted to give it real power ; or, rather, to make it feel that its prerogatives existed in reality as well as in name. This, like many more of his actions, was the continuation of a policy inaugurated by his predecessor.

It is said that no emperor exceeded Marcus in deference to the Senate. He consulted it not only with respect to his public acts, but also to his private affairs.

He attended its sessions whenever he was in Rome, and he would come from Campania if he had any communication to make. He never left his seat till the president dismissed the assembly. He let the Senate judge the appellations of the consuls. He raised no one to the order unless he knew him personally. He appointed senators to be curators of cities, and assisted some who were indigent by making them aediles and tribunes. In case of any grave accusation against a senator, he examined the matter privately before proceeding publicly, and he did not permit knights to take part in the trial. He was particularly desirous that in his time no member of the Senate should be executed for any cause.[1] He could not bear even the thought of terrorization.

Following the example of his predecessor, Marcus sought the improvement of law. M. Renan, who has a valuable chapter on this subject, points out excellent reforms made by the two emperors in regard to the condition of slaves, to the mutual obligations of parents and children, and to the rights of women. In the case of slaves, it became a crime to kill them and a misdemeanour to ill treat them. Members of a family could not be sold separately. Liberation was favoured in various ways, and liberated slaves were protected from designs upon their liberty. Property unclaimed by the legal heirs was divisible among the slaves of the person who left it. These provisions were infinitely more just than any that obtained in America during the existence of slavery under a Christian government. Moreover, as M. Renan says, they were even less beneficial than the enlightened sentiment which produced them, and which not only ensured their liberal administration, but which also ended fifty or sixty years later in Ulpian's

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 10, 11, 25, 29.

famous dictum that "By nature all men are born free and equal."[1]

Capitolinus attributes several good enactments to Marcus. Thus he enforced the regulation that the children of free citizens should be registered within thirty days of their birth, and he extended the rule to the provinces, so that persons born there could prove their identity at the metropolis in suits for civil rights. He made statutes regulating bank affairs, auctions, heritages, and trusteeships. He instituted a praetor for wards. He increased the grounds for the appointment of curators.[2] He tempered in many ways the gladiatorial shows, which under him became as harmless as athletic contests, the swords used being first rendered innoxious. He detested the morbid craving for blood. Once, when a slave had given a lion the apparently unnecessary training to eat human flesh, and was expecting enfranchisement as a reward for providing the public with a sensational spectacle, Marcus caused the herald to proclaim that the man had done nothing worthy of liberty.[3] In the same spirit the perils of rope-dancing were lessened by the introduction of nets below the performers.[4] But he indulged the public tastes, if at all reasonable, providing for entertainments even in his absence, and once furnishing a hundred lions for the shooters. He also adjusted the wages of players and the returns due to givers of spectacles. To spare commerce he ordered that the pantomimes should begin later on work-days.[5] He took various measures for the suppression of luxury and the protection of morals.

[1] MARCUS AURELIUS, c. 2. It is just to add that Hadrian is said to have made laws for the protection of slaves [Spart. HAD. 18].
[2] Registration, et cetera; Cap. M. ANT. 9, 10.
[3] *Ib.* 11; Dio, lxxi, 29.
[4] Cap. M. ANT. 12.
[5] *Ib.* 23, 17, 11, 23.

Thus he forbade horse-riding and carriage-driving within the cities, abolished the practice of mixed bathing, and made certain provisions to restrain the dissoluteness of ladies and of noble youths.[1] If the wits of Rome had forgotten Faustina, they would recall her when they heard this sage institution. Besides these reforms concerning laws and by-laws, Marcus decreed one of a political character, and with the promise of great effects. For, according to Victor, he extended Roman citizenship promiscuously to all his subjects. Later researches indicate that this right was bestowed in such a manner as to exclude both certain burdens and certain advantages.[2]

In fiscal matters Marcus acted generously, despising informers and never favouring the treasury in actions for dues and demands.[3] Upon the other hand, although strictly economical, he did not shrink from incurring additional expenses whenever these became necessary, and at such times he used to contribute liberally from his own resources to spare those of his people.[4] His administration was paternal. He made regulations for the supply of grain, particularly in time of famine, and he paid great attention to the maintenance of ways, both as regards the streets of Rome and the great roads. Many cities that had got into distress from earthquakes and other causes received his assistance, and various public works were carried out at his instigation.[5]

[1] Cap. M. ANT. 23.

[2] CAES. 16. Wenck, in a note to Gibbon, i, p. 213, recommends *Joh. P. Mahneri Commentatio de Marco Aurelio Antonino constitutionis de civitate universo orbi Romano data auctore.* Halae, 8 vo. 1772.

[3] Cap. M. ANT. 11, 12. [4] Dio, lxxi, 32; Cap. M. ANT. 17.

[5] Cap. M. ANT. 11; Vic. CAES. 16; Dio, lxxi, 32. Dr. Bodek (p. 99) observes that the first work indicating the names and the distances of the places upon the great highways of the Roman Empire was ascribed to Marcus under the title ITINERARIUM

To the administration of justice Marcus paid special attention. He appointed 230 days yearly for judicial business. He insisted strongly upon the careful hearing of cases, and made a praetor hear one again because of having heard it too rapidly. He himself was a perfect judge. His letters to Fronto show that he assumed the office at an early age, and that he executed it assiduously. After becoming Emperor he tried all the more important affairs, and as many others as possible. His care was meticulous. He allowed pleaders ample time, and inquired closely into every detail. He would devote eleven or twelve days to a trial, and sometimes protracted it through the night before giving sentence. In criminal causes he favoured leniency, and always inflicted the minimum of punishment except in very great offences.[1]

Whenever possible he exercised mercy. Of this an amusing incident is related. A man, getting up into a wild fig-tree on the Field of Mars, proclaimed that fire from heaven would descend and finish the world if he should fall and be transformed into a stork ; the object of this prediction being to create a panic in which he and his accomplices might pillage the city. Thereupon he slipped down, letting free at the moment a stork which he had concealed on his person. He was discovered and apprehended, but received pardon from the Emperor upon confession.[2]

ANTONINI AUGUSTI ; and he adds that, although erroneous, this ascription is a testimony to the interest of Marcus in roads and communications. The work certainly did not appear before the days of Constantine the Great, and therefore more than a century after Marcus had departed this life.

[1] Cap. M. ANT. 10, 20 ; Dio, lxxi, 6. Dr. Bodek mentions the cultivation of justice as one of the things which the Talmud imputes to its "Antoninus" when in Palestine. MECHITTA DE R. ISHMAEL (in JUCHASIN, AMORAIM, S.) ; B. p. 143.

[2] Cap. M. ANT. 13.

Marcus had an intense love of work, and he gave himself up so entirely to his various duties that he never spoke, wrote, or acted simply as a matter of form. On the contrary, he spent whole days even on slight matters, thinking that an emperor should never do anything rashly, and that if he failed in one instance it would cast reproach upon all his other conduct.[1] Whenever a principle was not at stake he treated the opinion of others with the greatest deference. He always took counsel with his principal subjects, saying that it was fairer that he should follow the many than that the many should follow him. He replied either orally or in writing to numerous persons who found fault with him because his philosophy gave an appearance of sternness to his civil and military administration.[2] But he was so firm in doing what he believed to be right that throughout his long and difficult wars neither flattery nor fear ever moved him from the proper course ; while, as regards the granting of pardons, he was never deterred either by the audacity of the offenders or by the apprehension of encouraging crime. His generosity in this respect was immense. He forgave many who had revolted openly and with arms against him and his son—generals, chiefs, and kings, never destroying any of them, either by his own decree or by that of the Senate, under any pretence whatsoever.[3]

As regards those petty insults which are often more difficult to support than serious injuries, Marcus exhibited the same spirit of clemency. He let the rabble of the amphitheatre crack jokes over his habit of transacting business at the public games.[4] He endured the sarcasms of the comedian Marullus,[5] and ignored the jests of clowns upon his matrimonial infelicities.[6] Except in

[1] Dio, lxxi, 6. [2] Cap. M. Ant. 22. [3] Dio, lxxi, 3, 30.
[4] Cap. M. Ant. 15. [5] *Ib.* 8. [6] *Ib.* 29.

the case of Lucius and in that of Commodus, Marcus showed himself eminently judicious in making appointments, especially those of the army. Three letters which illustrate this point have been preserved. They relate to Pescennius Niger and Clodius Albinus, two distinguished officers under Marcus, who, upon the death of his son, contended with Septimius Severus for the throne, and perished in their respective attempts.

Addressing Cornelius Balbus, Marcus says :—

> Thou laudest Pescennius to me. I know. For thy predecessor spoke of him as brave, serious, and already above his rank. Therefore I have sent letters, to be read before the troops, in which I have ordered him to be set over 300 Armenians, 100 Sarmatians, and 1,000 of our men. It is thy business to show that the man has attained, not by flattery (which is contrary to our manners), but by valour, a position which my grandfather Hadrian gave only to the most tried.[1]

Again :—

> Marcus Aurelius Antoninus to his prefects, greeting ; I have given two squadrons of cavalry to Albinus, member of the Ceionian family, and son-in-law of Plutillius. He is an African, but has little of the African. He is an experienced man, of severe life, and grave manners. I think he will do well in camp ; at least he will do no harm, as I know certainly. I have decreed him double salary, and the simple military dress, but four times the pay of his rank. You will exhort him to distin-

[1] Spart. PESCEN. 4. Two anecdotes of Pescennius are worth recording. He was fond of wine, but refused it to his men on expedition, and bid them be content with watered vinegar. When in Egypt they asked him for a more generous beverage ; whereupon he replied : "Ye have the Nile, and ye ask wine !" After being conquered by the Saracens, they cried : "We have received no wine ; we are not able to fight." To which he answered : "Blush, for they who conquer you drink water" (Spart. PESCEN. 6, 10, 7).

guish himself before the Republic. He shall have the reward he merits.[1]

Finally :—

> The constancy of Albinus should be extolled. He retained the troops when they were greatly disaffected and ready to join Avidius Cassius ; and but for him all would have revolted. We have therefore a man worthy of the consulate, whom I will put in the place of Cassius Papirius, who is reported to be near death. Meanwhile I am unwilling to publish this appointment, lest it should reach the ears of Papirius, or of his friends, and so we should appear to have filled the place of a living consul.[2]

It is said that in the choice of public servants Marcus considered only merit, leaving birth and wealth out of account, and that if he found any one with special aptitude for anything he put him to it, without troubling about the rest of his conduct, saying that it was impossible to make men what we should like them to be, and that it was fitting to give each one the task which he could best perform for the State.[3] History does not furnish a nobler example of wisdom and candour. There is little wonder that Dio, a critic singularly destitute of benevolent illusions, does not hesitate to say of Marcus : "He possessed every virtue ; and in his government he showed himself the best of all who have ever exercised any kind of authority."[4]

[1] Cap. ALBIN. 10. [2] *Ib.* 10.

[3] Dio, lxxi, 34. Dr. Bodek mentions that under Marcus even the poorest, if capable, were admitted to the highest offices. P. 101. Cap. M. ANT. 10. [4] lxxi, 34.

Chapter XV

CONDUCT OF MARCUS TOWARDS THE CHRISTIANS

As we have seen, Marcus was in the habit of continuing the policy of his adoptive father, Titus Antoninus, and of taking him as his model on all occasions. Hence, as Marcus knew that Titus had treated the Christians with indulgence, he might well have been expected to take the same course, especially as it was strictly in harmony with his own disposition. Yet, so far from this being the case, his conduct induced the excellent Mosheim to observe :—

> If we except that of Nero, there was no reign under which the Christians were more injuriously and cruelly treated than under that of the wise and virtuous Marcus Aurelius.[1]

Baur, in contradistinction from Renan, holds that under Marcus extensive proceedings of regular form were for the first time taken against the Christians ; and he is of opinion that the conduct of the Christians compelled these measures.[2] Eusebius, and other sources, enable us to trace the course of events ; but the dates are more or less questionable ; which, however, is a matter of secondary importance. After mentioning the death of "Antoninus Pius" and the accession of "his son Marcus Aurelius Verus," Eusebius goes on to say that at this time Polycarp [Bishop of Smyrna] ended his

[1] Eccles. Hist. Ant. II, Part I, c. 2.
[2] Das Christentum (1853), p. 425.

life in the violent persecution then excited in Asia.[1] He next proceeds to cite, in extracts, the greater part of a letter purporting to have been sent from the Church of Smyrna to the Church of Philomelium, and containing a description of the fate of Polycarp and other martyrs. The missing fragments of this document have been traced and restored by Archbishop Usher (1580–1655), and they include an interesting attestation of authenticity made at the end of the piece. Here one Caius is said to have copied the letter from the copy of Irenaeus, disciple of Polycarp. Then one Socrates of Corinth declares that he copied the copy of Caius; and one Pionius adds that, when this was "almost obsolete," he searched for it, found it by the help of Polycarp in a vision, and duly transcribed it. What more could be asked?

From this account we learn that, the Christians of the district having in some way or other excited the hatred of the people, some were cruelly scourged, while others, after exquisite tortures, were confronted with wild beasts. The spectators, unsatiated by these horrors, demanded the arrest of Polycarp. He, at the request of his flock, had withdrawn to a neighbouring village. Being pursued, he withdrew a little further, but was betrayed by a servant. Even then he might have escaped had he not refused. Seeing him, his captors exclaimed: "Is it really worth while to arrest such an old man?" He gave them refreshment, and obtained two hours for prayer. On the way back Herod, justice of the peace, and his father Nicetes, meeting him, took him up into their chariot; but, after vainly urging him to use the formula *Lord Caesar*, and to sacrifice, they became abusive, and threw him into the road, thus

[1] H. E. iv, 15.

hurting his thigh. As he entered the stadium "a voice" from heaven, unheard by "many" for the great tumult, said: "Be strong, Polycarp; be a man." None saw the speaker, but "many" Christians heard "the voice." When examined by the proconsul, he was besought to take pity of his great age, and to save himself through repeating the Pagan formulas. This he refused, saying that he would not blaspheme his Saviour after having served him for eighty-six years. Then he solemnly declared: "I am a Christian." The proconsul said: "Persuade the people." Polycarp answered that he willingly addressed his judge, but considered the people unworthy to receive his defence. The proconsul threatened him successively with wild beasts and with fire. Polycarp remarked that a worse fire awaited the ungodly, and bid him do his pleasure. The proconsul, visibly embarrassed, sent a herald to tell the people "Polycarp declares himself to be a Christian." They all, Jews and Gentiles alike, denounced Polycarp as a father of the Christians and an opponent of other religions, and besought Philip, the high priest, to let out a lion upon him. He refused, saying the spectacles were over. Then, in fulfilment of a vision previously seen by Polycarp, they clamoured for him to be burned alive. They prepared the pile quickly and bound Polycarp to the stake. He made a stately prayer, and then the fire was kindled. At this point the writers of the letter proceed to say:—

> We.....saw a wonder. For the flame, forming the appearance of an arch, as the sail of a vessel filled with wind, was a wall round about the body of the martyr, which was in the midst, not as burning flesh, but as gold and silver refined in the furnace. We also perceived a sweet fragrance, such as arises from frankincense or some other precious perfume.

> At length the impious, observing that his body could not be consumed by fire, ordered the confector to approach and to plunge his sword into the body. Upon this a quantity of blood gushed out and the fire was extinguished.

They would have liked to get the body; but the authorities, at the suggestion of certain persons instigated by the Jews, refused the permission; and "the centurion.....placed the body in the midst of the fire and burned it." After describing the end of Polycarp, the writers add that "eleven brethren from Philadelphia suffered with him, but he alone is particularly celebrated." Near the end of the account the event is said to have occurred during the proconsulate of Statius Quadratus. In 155 there was a proconsul of that name, but in 167 there was a consul named Ummidius Quadratus, and most critics prefer this date.[1] The notice appears to be an addition, and the writer may well have confused the two officials. Eusebius does not quote it; and if he had known and accepted it he would have had to place the event in the previous reign.

Every one who reads the above synopsis must be impressed by the fabulous circumstances it contains. To these should be added the flight of a dove from the body of Polycarp, which Eusebius, and after him other ecclesiastical authors, have discreetly omitted.[2] Renan thinks that the writers of the letter believed that they witnessed the miracles which they describe.[3] But this is impossible unless their sanity was affected. Hence, if the letter is, as it claims to be, the production of eye-witnesses, its flagrant untruths prove them to have been either madmen or liars. In the latter case the presence of incredible elements does not necessarily imply that

[1] Supernatural Religion (1902), p. 175.
[2] Long, p. 13. [3] Christian Church, c. 23.

the credible ones are likewise fictitious. The ancient historians, in describing the actions of generals and other celebrities, often provide them with speeches suitable to the different occasions. But the spuriousness of the speeches does not discredit the historicity of the actions. As regards the letter, the difference is between the invention of principal facts and the invention of attendant circumstances. Still, it seems likelier that, the original missive having vanished, the existing one was forged instead of it.

The distinguished critic last quoted says of the lucubration :—

> This rare fragment constitutes the most ancient example known of the Acts of Martyrdom. It was the model which people imitated, and which furnished the form and the essential parts of such compositions.[1]

A close study of the document, however, strongly suggests that it had not Melchizedek's lack of ancestry. Most Acts of Martyrdom proceed from a time when persecution had long ceased to exist, and were intended to give those in security a pleasant thrill, the details being in accordance with the treatment which the authors themselves would have employed in the case of Jews, infidels, and heretics. But in some cases these writings were composed while persecution still existed, the object being to encourage present sufferers by the example of past martyrs. The *Book of Daniel* is now regarded as a pious fiction designed to strengthen the Hebrews in their resistance to the impieties of Antiochus Epiphanes, and history is said to repeat itself.

Upon concluding his extracts from the above letter Eusebius states that there were subjoined to it accounts of other martyrs who suffered at Smyrna contemporaneously

[1] CHRISTIAN CHURCH, c. 23.

with Polycarp. He specifies Metrodorus, a heretical priest, and more especially one Pionius, saying that he had put into his Collection of Martyrs' Acts—now lost—a letter describing this man's remarkable sufferings and steadfastness. He then mentions the existence of memorials about certain martyrs at Pergamum—not far from Smyrna—namely, Corpus and Papylus, and a woman called Agathonice. Such was the state of proconsular Asia. The next reports concern the metropolis. For Eusebius proceeds to say that Justinus, after again addressing an *Apology* to the rulers of the Empire, was adorned with a glorious crown of martyrdom. Those rulers are Marcus and Lucius. The superscription of this second *Apology* gives it as addressed "to the Roman Senate"; but, although the writer does address the Romans in the first chapter, yet he evidently directed his appeal to their sovereigns, for in the second chapter he reminds the Emperor of a petition granted by him to a woman, and in other places he invokes the two Emperors.

The work states that a man whose wife desired a divorce accused her of Christianity to the authorities, and, finding she had appealed successfully to the Emperor for time to arrange her affairs, he caused her perverter, one Ptolemy, to be brought on the same charge before Urbicius [prefect of Rome], from whom he had already had much to endure. Urbicius simply asked him if he were a Christian, and, hearing him confess, ordered him to be removed for execution. Hereupon one Lucius, himself a Christian, protested against the sentence. Urbicius replied: "Thou also seemest to be a Christian." Lucius confessed, and was immediately sent to punishment. A third shared the same fate.

Justinus then declares that he himself awaits some

such accuser, perhaps Crescens, with whom he has often disputed, and whose ignorance he has triumphantly exposed. If the Emperors have not heard of this matter he is willing to question him in their presence, as such an inquiry is not unworthy of an emperor. Tatian, a disciple of Justinus, affirms that his master's apprehension was realized, for Crescens, who pretended to think death no evil, showed his true sentiments by seeking to have him punished with it.[1] Eusebius infers from Tatian's words that Crescens occasioned Justinus's martyrdom ; but he gives no particulars of the event, or of the trial preceding it. These, however, are supplied by the Acts of the Martyrdom of Justinus incorporated with his works. There we hear that Justinus, and six of his fellow believers, being brought before Rusticus, prefect of Rome, were ordered "to worship the gods and to obey the emperor." They refused, professing their own faith. Rusticus then desired to know whether Justinus thought that, if he were executed, he would go to heaven and be rewarded for his fidelity. Justinus replied that he was sure of it. The prefect then told them that they must all sacrifice to the gods. Justinus again refused. The prefect next threatened him with a cruel death. Justinus said it was precisely through such a death that they hoped to be saved at the tribunal of their Lord. The rest answered to the same effect. Rusticus then sentenced them to be scourged and beheaded for not sacrificing to the gods, and for not obeying the emperor. This was done.

As the above account proceeds from Justinus's party, who were notoriously in the habit of perverting facts and of forging documents, it may not represent the truth, or at least the whole truth. But, if it be true,

[1] Contra Graecos, 18.

then, since Justinus and the rest were indicted under a certain law, and since they pleaded guilty to the indictment, and even repeated the indicted fact before their judge, it follows that their condemnation to the penalty prescribed by the law was perfectly legal in all respects and quite inevitable in the natural course of justice. The principal persons implicated in the affair are Justinus, Crescens, and Rusticus. The first, as we learn from his own writings, was born at Flavia Neapolis, in Palestinian Syria[1]—i.e., the ancient Sichem in Samaria. He was originally a Pagan, and, after studying philosophy, became a Christian.[2] Eusebius ascribes to him several works designed to convert Pagans, Jews, and heretics.[3] He taught Christianity at Rome, where he met with Crescens, against whom he disputed. Eusebius describes Crescens as a Cynic philosopher, and Justinus and Tatian accuse him of pederasty and greed. As Justinus taught his religion publicly, and even brought it to the notice of the Emperors, there would not be any need for Crescens to accuse him of Christianity. He may, however, have urged the authorities to take action, and perhaps have supplied them with private information.

A Rescript cited by Mr. Long[4] proves that Rusticus was prefect of Rome "under the Emperors Aurelius and Verus." We have seen that Marcus studied philosophy under Rusticus; that he respected him the most of all his teachers; that he frequented him for public and private advice; that he appointed him twice to the consulate, and that he paid him signal marks of honour both in life and after death.[5] Moreover, he says:—

> From Rusticus.....I learned.....with respect to those who have offended me by words, or done me any wrong, to be easily disposed to be pacified and

[1] I Apol. c. 1. [2] Diol. cum Trypho. c. 23.
[3] H. E. iv, 18. [4] P. 12. [5] Pp. 4, 84.

> reconciled, as soon as they have shown a readiness to be reconciled. *Med.* B. 1, c. 7.

A man of this kind would surely judge with impartiality, and be disposed to give as mild a sentence as the case permitted. The martyrdom of Polycarp and that of Justinus probably occurred within the period 166–168.

The next evidence as to how matters stood between the Christians and the authorities is furnished by the *Apology* which Melito, Bishop of Sardis, addressed to Marcus. Therein occurs this clause: "that brilliant Roman power of which thou art, and also wilt be with thy son, the applauded inheritor." Here the omission of reference to Lucius indicates that the *Apology* was written after his death, which occurred in 169; while the phrase "thou art and also wilt be with thy son," by seeming to distinguish between the present, when Marcus is reigning alone, and the future, when he will be reigning with his son, apparently indicates a time preceding the elevation of Commodus in 176 to the imperial rank.

The tone of the *Apology* is tactful and courteous. The writer complains of a thing without precedent—namely, that religious men in Asia are being persecuted in virtue of "new edicts," whereby unscrupulous sycophants extort money night and day. If these were made by the Emperor, well and good. Nevertheless, he is requested to examine the matter. If, however, they are not his prescriptions, then all the more earnestly is relief implored. The Empire has flourished ever since Christianity began.[1] This prosperity he inherits, and

[1] Melito, who calls the Christian religion "our philosophy," does not scruple to affirm that under the mighty rule of Augustus it began to bloom in the provinces of the Empire; whereas John the Baptist, the alleged herald of Jesus, did not make his appearance until the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, the successor of Augustus. (LUKE iii, 1, 2.)

will inherit with his son, if he only protects that religion. Nero and Domitian alone sought to bring it into disrepute. Hadrian and Antoninus Pius intervened by letters to hinder proceedings against its professors. As the Emperor himself has the same disposition towards them, or, rather, one still more philanthropic and rational, it is felt that he will grant these requests.

The above statements present many difficulties. As the *Apology* ignores Lucius it could not have appeared less than two years after the proceedings at Smyrna and Pergamum, when Polycarp and others lost their lives. But these towns were near to Sardis, of which Melito was bishop. Why, then, did he wait such a long time before raising his protest? The matter becomes still more obscure if, as most critics think, the clause "with thy son" qualifies both "art" and "wilt," and therefore means that Commodus was already upon the throne. For this makes the *Apology* later than November 27, 176, the date of his elevation.[1] As Melito thought it without precedent for religious men to be persecuted in Asia, although he must have known that Polycarp and others had suffered martyrdom there some years previously, I conclude that the alleged persecution was more or less continuous from the time when Polycarp suffered to the time when Melito wrote. Again, as Melito writes to expose the disastrous effects of "new edicts," I infer that the repression which began with the execution of Polycarp, or a little before that event, proceeded ineffectively for some years under Trajan's Rescript, and then became effective under a new and severer decree made shortly before the *Apology* of Melito. Hence it appears that Marcus, finding Trajan's measures insufficient, issued drastic orders.

[1] Lamp. Com. 2, 12.

Besides Justinus and Melito, two other apologists, Claudius Apollinaris, Bishop of Hierapolis, and Athenagoras, an Athenian philosopher, addressed Marcus; while two others, Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch,[1] and Minucius Felix, an African lawyer,[2] addressed the general public. These writings evidence the adverse condition of the Christians at that period. The work of Apollinaris is lost; but Eusebius, who mentions its address, quotes Apollinaris as referring (apparently therein) to the affair of the Thundering Legion. This, it will be remembered, was the occasion when, in 174, an unexpected shower relieved the thirst of the Roman army, while the hail and the lightning which immediately followed discomforted the enemy. The Pagans attributed the fortunate occurrence to the intercession of Marcus; the Christians to the prayers of their brethren.

The work of Athenagoras bears the following inscription :—

> The Embassy of Athenagoras the Athenian, a Philosopher and a Christian, concerning Christians, to the Emperors Marcus Aurelius Antoninus and Lucius Aurelius Commodus, Armeniaci, Sarmatici, and, above all, Philosophers.

The writer protests that the Christians are falsely accused of bad conduct, and he complains that "it is not just to be punished for the name we bear." He admits that they are in the habit of kissing one another, but declares that "the Word"—meaning Jesus—has forbidden any one to take more than a single kiss at a time. He also says that, although they have slaves, some more, some less, none of these ever confirmed the accusations alleged against their masters—a statement

[1] He addresses a certain Autolycus, who is probably fictitious.
[2] Keim's Celsus' Wahres Wort (1873), pp. 151–168.

contradicted by other authorities. In conclusion, he praises the excellence, the moderation, and the humanity of the Emperors, and says that the Christians pray for their sovereign, for the security of his son's succession, and for the extension of the empire over the whole world, knowing that public peace and well-being are the best safeguards of their own liberty.[1]

After his reference to the apologies of Melito and Apollinaris, Eusebius declares that in various parts of the earth during the seventeenth year of the reign of Marcus (i.e., March, 177, to March, 178) persecution flamed with exceptional violence against the Christians, through popular excitement in towns, and over the whole world innumerable persons then distinguished themselves by martyrdom. As an illustrative example, he mentions the case of the Christians in the district of Lyons and Vienne, and quotes long extracts from a letter upon the subject which purports to have been sent by the Churches in question to those of Proconsular Asia and Phrygia. The substance of this document is as follows :—Having for some reason or other incurred the odium of their fellow citizens, the Christians could not appear publicly without danger ; and at last, after a great outburst against them, they were cast into prison, in the absence of the local governor, an imperial legate. He, upon his arrival, proceeded roughly against them. Some died under the conditions of their imprisonment, and two perished in the arena. Those who recanted received no benefit. Finally, the legate applied to the Emperor for instructions. Marcus answered that persisters in the faith must be slain, but abjurers thereof released. The heroine of the letter is Blandina, a slave

[1] SUPERNATURAL RELIGION, pp. 398–404 ; Renan's MARCUS AURELIUS, c. 22.

whose mistress was also among the accused. She is described as being of weak constitution, yet her endurance was such

> that those who successively tortured her from morning to night were quite worn out with fatigue, and owned themselves conquered and exhausted of their whole apparatus of tortures, and were amazed to see her still breathing while her body was torn and laid open. They confessed that any single species of torture would have been sufficient to dispatch her, much more so great a variety as had been applied.

With the other accused, Blandina was now

> thrust into the darkest and most noisome parts of the prison ; their feet were distended in a wooden frame to the fifth hole ; and in this situation they suffered all the indignities which diabolical malice could inflict. Hence many of them were suffocated in prison.

At a special show arranged for the purpose two of the accused, Maturus and Sanctus, who had suffered hideous torments, perished at last. Then, in turn,

> Blandina, suspended from the stake, was exposed to the wild beasts.....None of the beasts at that time touched her. She was taken down from the stake, thrown again into prison, and reserved for a future contest.

When this arrived Blandina and Ponticus, a youth of fifteen, after having witnessed daily the execution of their companions, were given the chance of recantation, and upon their refusal

> their torments were aggravated by all sorts of methods, and the whole round of barbarities was inflicted.

This proved too much for Ponticus, who, in spite of Blandina's encouragement, gave up the ghost.

> And now the Blessed Blandina, after she had endured stripes, the tearing of the beasts, and the (red hot) iron chain, was enclosed in a net and thrown to a bull, and having been tossed some time by the animal, and proving quite superior to her pains, was at last executed.

Although this blood-curdling story utterly defies common sense and bears every mark of fiction, yet it has excited the admiration and drawn the tears not only of the credulous but also of some from whom very different conduct might have been expected. In my opinion, the sufferings of Blandina are so plainly impossible that they throw discredit upon the entire narrative, and therefore incline me to classify it with the many false Acts of Martyrs invented by the wits of the pious. Still there remains the possibility that the tale is the exaggerated record of some proceedings which actually occurred. In this case it is certain that Marcus, whom all acknowledge to have been a most thoughtful and humane ruler, would never have proceeded to such extremities unless he had believed them to have been justified by the conduct of the accused. Mr. Long, whose book I had not seen before recording the above opinion, lays great stress upon the improbabilities alleged with respect to the martyrdom of Sanctus, and subsequently declares :—

> A man can only act consistently by accepting all this letter or rejecting it all ; and we cannot blame him for either. But he who rejects it may still admit that such a letter may be founded on real facts, and he would make this admission as the most probable way of accounting for the existence of the letter. But if, as he would suppose, the writer has stated some things falsely, he cannot tell what part of his story is worthy of credit. P. 7.

But to this Matthew Arnold justly replies :—

> Mr. Long seems inclined to throw doubt over the persecution at Lyons by pointing out that the letter of the Lyons Christians relating it alleges it to have been attended by miraculous and incredible incidents. "A man," he says, "can only act consistently by accepting all this letter or by rejecting it all, and we cannot blame him for either." But it is contrary to all experience to say that because a fact is related with incorrect additions and embellishments therefore it probably never happened at all; or that it is not, in general, easy for an impartial mind to distinguish between the fact and the embellishments. I cannot doubt that the Lyons persecution took place, and that the punishment of Christians for being Christians was sanctioned by Marcus Aurelius. (Long, Appendix to new ed.)

What I said of the letter describing the martyrdom of Polycarp and his friends applies even more strongly to that describing the martyrdom of Blandina and her companions. The writers must have been either madmen or liars. But here, as there, the possibility remains that a very different account was at first rendered, and that the existing fictions are of later date. The above facts justify the opinion of Mosheim that the Christians experienced unusual severity during the reign of Marcus, and they explain why Baur thought that this was the first reign in which regular proceedings against the Christians became extensive. The noble character of Marcus, as exemplified in his just and humane administration, is so well established that Christian writers never attempted to pursue in his case their habitual tactic of calumniating enemies. Indeed, they took the opposite course, and, with the aid of forged documents, sought to prove, against the overwhelming force of all the contrary evidence, that he had given them the

authority of his wisdom and virtue by supporting their cause. Tertullian says that, in consequence of the affair of the Thundering Legion, Marcus wrote "letters" to protect the Christians ;[1] and a forged missive of preposterous description subjoined to Justin's first *Apology*, and apparently suggested by one ascribed to Nebuchadnezzar,[2] alludes to the same event, and orders that any one who accuses another simply of being a Christian shall, if the accused confess, be burned alive ! Orosius, calmly ignoring the authority of Eusebius, represents all the proceedings against the Christians in the reign of Marcus as being anterior to the above episode. Thus the hostility of Marcus towards the Christians is made all the more impressive by their vain efforts to disguise it.

[1] APOL. 5. [2] DANIEL iii, 29.

Chapter XVI

REASONS OF THE CONDUCT OF MARCUS TOWARDS THE CHRISTIANS

In the foregoing chapter it has been shown that Marcus approved, and even enforced, the measures taken by his predecessors to extinguish Christianity. How is this fact to be explained? It is sometimes pretended that Marcus knew very little about the Christians and their religion; but this pretension is absurd. He had a studious, thoughtful, and inquisitive disposition, and he showed special interest in religion by his zeal in performing the duties of the Salian priesthood, and by his obtaining initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries. Besides this, his dear friend and honoured teacher, Cornelius Fronto, attacked the Christians in an oration which became famous. On their side of the question, the polite apologies of Melito, Athenagoras, and Felix, to say nothing of Justin's rude appeals, could not but arrest the attention of Marcus.

Again, it is certain that his scrupulous justice would impel him to go thoroughly into the case of the Christians, even with respect to the operation of existing laws; and therefore still more with respect to the imposition of severer edicts; while it is equally clear that one so inclined as he was to forgive all kinds of personal injuries would not be less disposed to pardon offences involving no personal injury. Finally, it must be remembered that the matter was extremely grave, for the property and the lives of thousands of his

subjects were at stake; and we know that Marcus always insisted upon even trivial cases being heard with meticulous care, and that he preferred to punish under the limit except for the worst offences. How, then, is his conduct in the present instance to be explained?

According to the popular notion, the Christians of the first three centuries were a meek, inoffensive folk, who suffered persecution because their shining virtues aroused the envy of a wicked world. This view reduces the matter to an episode in the age-long struggle between good and evil. But the representation is false. The Christians were only meek and inoffensive when they had no power to be pretentious and aggressive; and it was not long before they began to exhibit their dangerous tendencies.

It is worth remarking that, although the divine legation of Moses punished all new religions with death,[1] the Roman law was much more lenient. By the statutes of the Twelve Tables (B.C. 451) private gods and new gods were forbidden, and likewise strange gods unless publicly acknowledged. But a wide and ever-increasing toleration prevailed. Unlike Catholic and Islamic powers, the Romans never attempted to extend their religion with the sword. The Senate decreed the gods of the Fatherland, and recognized those of the conquered provinces. Proselytism was forbidden. Liberty of worship was respected and protected. The Jews, although greatly disliked, were nevertheless, on account of their religious prejudices, exempted from attending Law Courts on the Sabbath and from all military service; and they also escaped from worshipping the emperors by paying a light tax. The only interference

[1] DEUT. xiii, 6, 11; xvii, 2, 7. The penalty was to be inflicted by stoning, and a man must inflict it even upon his brother, son, daughter, wife, or friend.

was in case of rites and principles likely to endanger the State or to injure public morality. Thus, in B.C. 186, the Consul Postumius, calling an assembly of the people, brought before it a charge of obscenity against the Bacchic Mysteries, then practised by great numbers, mostly women, and, having proved his charge, got them suppressed with drastic penalties.[1] Between A.D. 41 and 54 the Emperor Claudius likewise put down the human sacrifices of the Druids.[2]

After the sanguinary revolt of the Jews in 132 under a false Messiah named Bar-Cochba, the Emperor Hadrian, knowing that their religion animated their disaffection, deprived them of their religious rights, even including that of circumcision, which, however, was restored to them in the next reign on condition that they restricted it to themselves and made no converts.[3] Marcus himself forbade the inhabitants of Pelusium (now Finch), a city in Egypt, to hold the Fêtes of Serapis, the great god of their people, because at those ceremonies licentiousness prevailed.[4] These facts prove that in general the Romans tolerated the religions of the Empire, and indicate why they adopted repressive measures towards them in particular cases.

This equality, however, did not suit the Christians, for, as a High Church writer approvingly declares, "Christianity would not come to terms. It would not even consent to the drawing up of preliminaries for a treaty of peace. The words of its Master were being continually illustrated by all Christian missionaries: 'I am not come to send peace, but a sword.' Christianity sought not toleration, but universal supremacy."[5] "The Fathers of the Church," says Hagenbach, "uni-

[1] Liv. xxxix, 8–19.
[2] Suet. CLAUD. 25.
[3] Renan's CHRISTIAN CHURCH, 12.
[4] Cap. M. ANT. 23.
[5] Blunt's DIC. HIST. THEOL. (1872), art. *Paganism.*

formly asserted, both in opposition to heretics and to all who were not Christians, that there is no salvation out of the Church."[1] As a result of this intolerant and bellicose attitude Christianity soon entered into collision with the authorities. Polytheism was the national religion. The Christians traced its origin to evil spirits, and covered it with abuse and ridicule. They polluted the altars and the images of the gods, and invoked those deities with truculent blasphemy.[2] They declined to frequent the public games, the theatres, and even private feasts because of the religious ceremonies therewith connected. Moreover, although the worship of the emperors, living and dead, was the test of both loyalty and orthodoxy, they refused to render this homage, thus exposing themselves to the charge of treason as well as to that of impiety. Hence it is certain that they were justly liable to punishment. The only question is whether, from policy or from humanity, the offence should have been condoned. To this it may be answered that a Government must protect the liberties of its subjects, and that the conduct of the Christians proved them a danger to the greatest of all liberties—liberty of conscience.

The prevoyance of Marcus Aurelius was lamentably justified when little over two hundred years later Theodosius, the miserable creature of St. Ambrose, suppressed the pagan sacrifices under penalty of death. Previous to this the Church had become infamous by its treatment of Jews and heretics, and by its enmity towards the glorious culture of Rome. Statues of ineffable beauty, monuments of stately splendour, and vast libraries replete with the intellectual wealth of long ages vanished before the hammers and the torches of

[1] HIST. DOC. I, Period v, sec. 71. [2] Keim's CELSUS, p. 127.

Christian mobs led by Christian clerics in the fury of obscene destructiveness. The mental servitude which followed this ignoble triumph of the Cross resulted, first, in the almost immediate fall of the Roman Empire, and then in a period of darker ignorance and of more sordid vice than had ever before afflicted humanity. The punishment received by the Christians for their rebellious conduct filled them with hatred towards the State. The apologists, indeed, represent them as loyal citizens and as lovers of their persecutors ; but the falsity of these contentions is evident from the writings of the prophets, which express the secret thoughts and wishes of the community. The seer of the *Apocalypse* gloats with excogitated malice over the prospective burning of Rome :—

> Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye saints, and ye apostles, and ye prophets ; for God hath judged your judgment upon her (xviii, 20).

The Sibyls raise the same strain :—

> Oh how shalt thou weep then, despoiled of thy brilliant garments and clad in habits of mourning. Oh proud queen, daughter of old Latinus ! thou shalt fall no more to rise again. The glory of thy legions, with their proud eagles, will disappear. Where will be thy strength ? What people will be allied unto thee of those whom thou hast overcome by thy follies ? (Renan, CHRISTIAN CHURCH, c. 27).

Certain it is that an Irish patriot who thus depicted the burning of London, or a Communist who thus envisaged the destruction of the British Empire, would be likely to find himself a person of no small interest to the police.

The hostility of the Christians towards the established religion naturally irritated the populace, and whenever an earthquake or any other disaster occurred it was

imputed to the wrath of the gods at Christian impiety. This rendered disturbances inevitable, and thus the Christians became obnoxious to justice for occasioning breaches of the peace as well as for refusing obedience. In many cases the authorities would have ignored what the Christians had done but for the knowledge that in overlooking it they would lose public respect, and that, unless they did interfere, the people would take the law into their own hands, with terrible consequences.

The above facts are notorious, and will not be disputed. But the Romans also took proceedings against the Christians for other reasons, the validity of which is less easy to determine. About 111 Pliny the younger, a man of high character and of great wisdom, who was then administering the provinces of Bithynia and Pontus in Asia Minor, wrote the Emperor Trajan to know whether he should prosecute Christians for "the name itself" or only "for the crimes (*flagitia*) cohering to the name,"[1] adding that, as the result of his own inquiries, he had discovered nothing worse about the religion than that it was "a debased and extravagant superstition." A few years later Tacitus, the philosophical historian, who was a friend and correspondent of Pliny, stated in his history that in the time of Nero the Christians were "hated for crimes (*flagitia*)."[2] Later still Suetonius, the entertaining biographer of the first twelve Caesars, declared that under Nero "the Christians, a class of men of new and malefic superstition, were afflicted with punishments."[3] Neither Pliny nor Suetonius specifies the accusations made against the Christians, while Tacitus mentions only the supposititious one of setting Rome on fire, which he distinguishes from those whereby they had already incurred odium. But from the various

[1] EPIS. x, 9. [2] xv, 38–44. [3] NERO, 23.

apologists, and also from Eusebius, we learn that the Christians were accused of polluting their nocturnal assemblies with drunkenness and lewdness, and even with ritual cannibalism.

Now, in the early days of Christianity we find the Apostle Paul complaining of grave disorders in the Corinthian Church. He mentions inebriety[1] and fornication, "such fornication as is not even among the Gentiles."[2] Cardinal Bellarmin asserts that the nocturnal vigils of the Church were abandoned because "abuses had begun to creep in, or rather crimes (*flagitia*) were not rarely committed."[3] What transpired between Paul and this abolition? The charges occurred at trials widely separated in time and in space. Affirmative evidence was obtained from servants of the accused and from past members of the Church. Tertullian, who left the majority of his fellow Christians for the Montanist sect, drew a terrible picture of his former companions.[4] There were then, as there are now, innumerable sects and parties professing and calling themselves Christians, and Justin Martyr says that he does not know whether any of these committed such offences as those laid to the charge of his brethren, but that he is sure the authorities do not make them the object of their proceedings.[5] Later fathers, however, declare that some of these sects and parties were guilty of the misdeeds in question.[6] Moreover, it should be noted that from Paul onwards Christian teachers termed their rites and doctrines *mysteries*, and that the Roman Empire was full of systems called *mysteries*, some of which undoubtedly included evils similar to those imputed to

[1] I Cor. xi, 21. [2] *Ib.* v, 1. [3] De Eccles. Triump. iii, c. *ulto.*
[4] De Jejuniis. 17. [5] I Apol. 35.
[6] Iren. Adv. Haeres. I, 1, 9; Clem. Alex. Strom. iii, 430; Epiphan. Haeres. xxvi, 42, 43.

Christianity. As the adepts of such mysteries were bound to secrecy by terrific oaths, comparatively little about them and their practices was disclosed to the public; and in cases where evil existed the guilty had the strongest possible interest in preserving silence, for confession would both incriminate them with the authorities and expose them to the implacable vengeance of their associates.

In deed, as in name, the Christians made a mystery of their system. They had what is called a *disciplina arcani*, consisting of certain rites and doctrines kept from the public. None was permitted to witness baptism before receiving it, or the Eucharist before being qualified to receive it,[1] which is very singular if those ceremonies were as innocent then as they are to-day. Tertullian even goes so far as to blame the heretics for disclosing to Pagans the secrets of Christianity.[2] As respects the Apologists, if there be any truth in the saying *qui s'excuse s'accuse*, they did their party a very questionable service, for they laboured frantically to rebut the accusations. This, however, is nothing compared with the indiscretion of the ecclesiastical authorities, who, on attaining power, destroyed the lucubrations of their opponents, thus exposing themselves to the suspicion of having suppressed evidence which they could not refute.

The foregoing remarks show why the Roman authorities thought it desirable to suppress Christianity. The increased suppression under Marcus may have arisen either from greater provocation on the part of the Christians or from special dislike of them on the part of the Emperor, or indeed from both these causes. The more the sect grew in numbers the more would it appear

[1] Blunt, art. *Discip. Arcani.*
[2] Apol. 7; De Praescrip. Haer. 41.

a present nuisance and a future danger. Hence a conscientious ruler like Marcus would feel obliged to strengthen the repressive measures. Besides this, there was much in Christianity that would make a specially bad impression upon a man of his peculiar character and disposition. The preliminary demand set forth in the ever-repeated maxim, "Prove not; only believe, and thy faith shall save thee," was utterly at variance with his deep conviction that man participates in the divine reason, and is able both to understand and to obey its precepts. The perpetual harping upon sin, and upon redemption from its penalties through faith in a vicarious sacrifice, was no less opposed to his belief that virtue, not vice, should be the great object of attention; that the sole penalty of wickedness is to be wicked; and that the only means of salvation is in ceasing to do evil by learning to do good.

The favourite argument of the Christians, their appeal to fear through the menace of everlasting fire, would seem singularly ignoble to a Stoic, and therefore it is very natural to find Marcus edicting that exploiters of superstitious terrors should be relegated to an island.[1] He must have experienced a similar disgust on hearing that the Christians habitually flaunted the hope of immortality as the motive of virtue, thus placing the crown of life above the life of service. Another part of their conduct which he evidently regarded with contempt was the theatrical attitude which, according to the

[1] "*Si quis aliquid fecerit, quo leves hominum animi superstitione numinis terrerentur, dives Marcus hujusmodi homines in insulam relegari rescripsit*" (Modestinus, in DIGEST, 48, 19, 30). Dr. Aitken, speaking of religious malancholy, says: "There are some preachers whose great power in the pulpit is to be attributed to the excitement and alarm they are able to produce upon susceptible people.....these preachers were wont to be banished in Pagan times by a law of Marcus Aurelius" (SCIENCE AND PRACTICE OF MEDICINE, vol. ii, p. 594).

ecclesiastical narratives, they assumed in the face of martyrdom; for he writes:—

> What a soul that is which is ready, if at any moment it must be separated from the body, and ready either to be extinguished or dispersed or continue to exist; but so that this readiness comes from every man's own judgment, and not from mere obstinacy, as with the Christians, but considerately and with dignity and in a way to persuade another, without tragic show (MED. B. xi, c. 3).

Finally, the proselytizing methods of the Christians, as described by Celsus and other contemporaries of Marcus, were altogether out of harmony with his frank and upright disposition. They decried science and insulted wisdom. They avoided persons of learning and judgment, and pursued the ignorant and the superstitious. They reached the wife without the knowledge of the husband, and got at the children through the slaves. They proved their faith from references thereunto forged by themselves in works published under the name of Sibyls, heathen prophetesses of the olden days;[1] and, while pretending in their apologies that Christianity was not revolutionary, they declared in their other writings that it was the only true religion, and that all its rivals had been set up by devils posing as deities. These considerations would inevitably strengthen the resolution of Marcus to pursue the Christians with the repressive measures which their illegal position and their offensive conduct invited, and which the prospect

[1] Justinus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius, and Lactantius all harp lustily on this string. Mosheim says: "The disingenuous and wicked method of surprising their adversaries by artifice, and striking them down, as it were, by lies and fictions, produced, among other disagreeable effects, a great number of books, which were falsely attributed to certain great men, in order to give these spurious productions more credit and weight" (CENT. 3; PART. 2, c. 2).

of their future intolerance towards all other religions made it prudent to adopt for the public safety.

Hence, as his principle was sound, its application alone could have exposed him to censure. Thus the only points that remain are these: In his attempt to suppress Christianity did he exceed the legal usages of his people, and did he punish more offenders than was necessary? Here it should be observed that torture of accused persons and of witnesses was permitted by the Roman law, and that under the emperors certain cruel punishments were imposable. In some cases the condemned had to fight one another to the death, while in others they were forced to contend with wild beasts, or were thrown to them to be devoured. The bloody scenes of the amphitheatre, which destroyed sympathy with pain, and even created a morbid delight in witnessing it, were chiefly responsible for these drastic penalties. But it should be remembered that in what are called the Ages of Faith thousands upon thousands were treated in ways no less horrible than the above for witchcraft and heresy.

Moreover, the Roman Empire was vast, and the local governors possessed great latitude in the administration of justice, that convenient person, "the man on the spot," being largely trusted. Usually the Christians were prosecuted as persons who caused public outbursts, either because they were known to insult the religion of their compatriots, or because they were supposed to draw down calamities from the gods by treating them with contempt. At such times public order was imperilled, and it had to be preserved. As regards the number sacrificed to justice, it should be particularly noted that, although Mosheim says that the Christians suffered more under Marcus Antoninus than under any preceding emperor except Nero, yet he

does not venture to estimate how many were put to death. If, however, we consider that the Christians in Nero's day must have been a mere handful compared with what they would be a hundred years later in the time of Marcus, it is evident that the number who perished could not be very great despite all the rhetorical outbursts of Eusebius.

Another thing that supplies food for reflection is that of all the twelve bishops of Rome mentioned by Eusebius, from the reign of Nero to that of Marcus inclusive,[1] only two, Peter and Telesphorus,[2] are affirmed by him to have suffered martyrdom, the one under Nero, and the other under Pius. It is quite certain that the Christians executed during the nineteen years that Marcus reigned did not equal in number more than a very small fraction of the Protestants slaughtered at Paris on St. Bartholomew's Day, 1572, when five hundred "persons of quality" and ten thousand of "the inferior sort" were put to death for the Protestant faith, to the great joy of Pope Gregory XIII, who ordered a *Te Deum* and other festivities in honour of the event.[3]

[1] H. E. ii, 25 ; v, 9. [2] *Ib.* iv, 10.

[3] Haydn's DICTIONARY OF DATES (1889), art. *St. Barthol.* In Spain alone during a period of 236 years (which is merely the length of that wherein the Romans intermittently "persecuted" the Christians) the Holy Inquisition executed 32,000, and otherwise punished 291,000. *Ib.* art. *Inquisition.*

Chapter XVII

THIRD GERMANIC WAR AND DEATH OF MARCUS

The revolt of Avidius Cassius compelled Marcus to leave the front before he had secured a durable peace. In his absence the task of keeping the conquered tribes to their engagements and of crushing actual or eventual opposition was left to the charge of the two brothers Quintilius. These, although men of prudence, courage, and experience, could not bring matters to a successful conclusion, and therefore, soon after his return from the East, Marcus resolved to assume the conduct of hostilities together with his son Commodus. Funds were needed for the war, and Marcus asked the Senate to let him take them from the treasury. He made this request, not because the money was out of his reach, but because he considered that, like everything else, it belonged to the Senate and the people. In asking for it he went so far as to say: "We have nothing that is ours; even the house we inhabit is yours." At this time—reviving, as is supposed, the ancient custom—he lanced a blood-stained spear towards the enemy's land from a spot near the Temple of Bellona.[1] Victor declares that when Marcus was ready to depart with Commodus a crowd of philosophers implored him not to incur the risks of the campaign before explaining to them the hard and secret (*ardua et occulta*) doctrines of the various sects.[2]

Gallicanus, who says this request was sincere and not

[1] Quintilius, etcetera. Dio, lxxi, 33. [2] Caes. 16.

a mere compliment, attributes it to the fear of all men for the safety of Marcus ; adding that, although Marcus himself had no such apprehension, yet, nevertheless, to oblige them he disputed three days in scientific order.[1]

The measures which Marcus took on reaching the front are not described ; but, according to Capitolinus, he warred for three years against the Marcomans, the Hermundures, the Sarmatians, and the Quades.[2] I take it that these three years were those which Eutropius and Orosius say that he spent consecutively at Carnuntum during the second Germanic War,[3] for the movements ascribed to him at that period seem to exclude the possibility of his having resided so long at any one place. Heylin declares Carnuntum to be the modern Presburg. This is on the Danube, 34 miles east of Vienna. It would, therefore, be a very suitable spot from which to direct operations. In all probability the health of Marcus rendered it inadvisable for him to travel about as he had done in the last campaign. There was, at any rate, one decisive battle. This was engaged by Paternus, to whom Marcus had entrusted a large army. The barbarians resisted for a whole day, but at last the Romans cut them to pieces. On this occasion Marcus was proclaimed *imperator* for the tenth time.[4]

The subsequent operations are not recorded, but Dio says that had Marcus survived he would have reduced all the country ; while Capitolinus, after mentioning that the war lasted three years, adds that had Marcus lived but a year longer he would have made provinces of the lands inhabited by the four tribes above named.[5]

[1] AVID CAS. 3. Evidently referring to this particular departure of Commodus [with Marcus], Lampridius (COM. 12) says that it took place *tertio nonas Commodias, Orpheto et Rufo consulibus.* This means August 3, 178. Orphetus and Rufus were then consuls (Liebenham). [2] Cap. M. ANT. 27.
[3] viii, 6 ; vii, 15. [4] Dio, lxxi, 33. [5] *Ib.* Cap. M. ANT. 27.

Once again, and this time forever, the fruit of victory was snatched away from his outstretched hand. For, under circumstances the nature of which remains obscure, he was taken ill at Vendobona (now Vienna), and died there seven days later on March 17, 180, after having reigned a little over nineteen years, and lived a little less than fifty-nine.[1] Dio, protesting the certainty of his knowledge, declares that Marcus was poisoned by the doctors to ingratiate themselves with Commodus, and that, to conceal the crime of his son, he recommended him to the army.[2] Hence, although Dio elsewhere affirms Commodus not to have been originally wicked, it is evident that nevertheless he believed him to have become depraved before his father's death. Capitolinus, however, represents that Marcus died in consequence of his refusal to take food.[3]

The Stoics in general and Marcus in particular[4] held the right of man to seek death whenever reason indicated this as the proper course. But since Marcus obviously attached great importance to the successful termination of the war, and since the conduct thereof was in his hands, it is to the last degree improbable

[1] Dio, who is the most reliable authority on the matter of dates, says that Marcus died March 17, having reigned nineteen years and eleven days, and being aged fifty-eight years, ten months, and twenty-two days (lxxi, 33, 34). Tertullian has *cum Marco Aurelio apud Sirmium reipublicae exempto, die decimo sexto Kalendarum Aprilium* (APOL. 25). Capitolinus has *octavo-decimo anno imperii suo, sexagesimo et primo vitae diem ultimum clausit* (M. ANT. 18). This involves an error of one year and twelve days respectively to the date given by Dio and Tertullian. Victor says *anno imperii octavo decimoque, aevi validior, Vendobonae interiit* (CAES. 16); and again, *vitae anno quinquagesimo nono, apud Vendobonam morbo consumptus est* (EPIT. 16). Eutropius says *obit xviii imperii anno, vitae lxi* (viii, 7). Liebenham gives March 17, 180 (p. 108).

[2] lxxi, 34.

[3] CAP. M. ANT. 28.

[4] MEDIT. iii, 1; v, 29; viii, 47; x, 8, 22. He says that to decide "whether a man should now depart from life.....requires a disciplined reason." iii, 1.

that a person with the moral insight and the moral courage which he possesed would fail to perceive that duty bid him remain at his post, or, perceiving this, would have played the part of a deserter. Of course, if he knew that death would inevitably prevent him from accomplishing his task, he was within his right in shortening the term of his sufferings. But nothing is said to prove that a fatal issue was certain, and Capitolinus rather implies the contrary. The probability is that Marcus, knowing that his death was being compassed by his son, and believing that it would occur in this way, resolved to spare him the commission of a crime by abandoning life of his own accord. It is equally probable that his illness and his son's conduct would appear to him an indication that the gods desired his departure. As he had passed his life in the fulfilment of duty, he would find it quite natural to seek death in the pursuit of the same end.

I have no doubt whatever that this was the case. There is some difficulty in tracing the facts, but by combining notices from Capitolinus, Victor, Herodian, and Dio a description is possible. The first of these authorities gives the following order of events :—The illness of Marcus lasted seven days. On the first he summoned Commodus, on the fifth (*ante biduum*) he addressed his friends, on the sixth (*sexta die*) he did this again, on the seventh (*septimo die*) he received Commodus, and in the following night he expired.[1] Into this outline the recorded details may thus be inserted. When he began to be ill he sent for Commodus, and immediately exhorted him not to despise what still remained of the war, nor to permit the exhausted barbarians to recover strength, lest he should appear to

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 28.

betray the republic. Commodus replied that, above all, he desired health ; adding that a living man could, even though slowly, finish his affairs, whereas a dead man could not do anything. Marcus permitted him to take his own course, requesting him, however, either to wait a few days or to leave at once.[1]

On the fifth day, some of his friends, probably his most intimate ones, having been admitted, he spoke reproachfully of Commodus. The final words imputed to him seem to have been that he regretted death because of leaving such a son behind him. As reported, however, they express the very opposite sentiment, but they are grammatically incorrect, and quite at variance with the context. On the next day these friends, probably with others of less intimacy, having been called,[2] he entrusted Commodus to their charge, saying :—

> All ye who are around me, be ye fathers to him. It is you who brought him up, you who instructed him when he entered into his first youth. Now that I am about to be no longer near him, forsake him not on the stormy sea of life, for fear lest, deprived of counsel, without experience and without guide, he turn away from the paths of virtue.[3]

He also spoke derisively of human fortune and contemptuously of the grave, adding : "Why weep ye for me, and think not rather upon the pestilence and the community of death?" When they were fain to depart, he said, with a groan : "If ye will already go away, I bid you farewell, going on before you." When they asked him to whom he would actually entrust Commodus, he replied : "To the immortal gods ; and to you if he shall be worthy." On the seventh day, becoming worse he received only Commodus, whom, however,

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 28 ; Vic. Epit. 17.
[2] Cap. M. Ant. 28. [3] Herod. i.

he dismissed forthwith on the pretext of fearing to communicate his disease.[1] When the tribune asked him for the watchword, he replied, like Tiberius to Macro: "Search the rising sun, for I approach my setting." He then covered his head as if to sleep, and passed away in the night.[2]

The soldiers, who all loved Marcus with a unique affection and who had bewailed his illness vehemently, raised a great mourning for his death. At Rome, where the citizens used to call him brother, father, son, according to their different ages, the melancholy tidings filled every one with dismay. The senators, putting on funereal robes, hastened to the place of assembly. There, solemn and apart, they were wont to proclaim the deification of departed emperors; but now, in a manner unparalleled before or since, senators and people, in a vast and over-flowing multitude, mingling their suffrages at one time and on one spot, declared as with a single voice that Marcus had ascended to become a propitious deity, and that in his honour priests, columns, and temples should be instituted. It is a fact even more impressive that on the day when his remains were taken through the streets of Rome to the mausoleum of Hadrian there was a great silence among the people, because none thought it seemly to utter a cry of woe, or to shed a tear, since all believed in their hearts that the gods, who had lent Marcus to them for a little while, had called him back again to be with themselves. Thus, what could hardly be persuaded of Romulus, was immediately and universally assumed of Marcus—that he had been carried up into heaven.[3]

Nor did this worship, like many of its kind, quickly pass away. Those whose means permitted it were judged

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 28. [2] Dio, lxxi, 34; Cap. M. Ant. 28.
[3] Cap. M. Ant. 18; Vic. Caes. 16; Epit. 16.

sacrilegious if they had not images of Marcus among their household deities. The Emperor Diocletian (284–305), a wise and virtuous man, paid Marcus especial devotion, saying that he desired to resemble him in life and in clemency. Capitolinus, who dedicated his biography of Marcus to Diocletian, says that, at the time of writing it, images of Marcus were among the domestic deities in many homes, and that there were not wanting those who declared that in dreams he had foretold them much which duly came to pass.[1] For my part, if it seemed credible to me that those who have died are able to help those who are still alive, there is no one who has ever lived to whom I would turn more quickly or with greater confidence than to Marcus, especially if it were a question of ascertaining duty or of receiving moral strength.

I have before described the appearance of Marcus as exhibited on a medal or a coin in the series of Roman emperors depicted in wood-cuts to which I referred when describing the appearance of Lucius.[2] On comparing the likeness of Marcus with that of Commodus a close resemblance of feature and much similarity of expression is observable. There is more vivacity, but hardly less good nature, in the son than in the father. Lucius, who has a better profile than either of them, is quite destitute of their affability. Dio insists that Marcus was of feeble constitution;[3] but the sports which he practised in youth and the hardships which he endured in manhood prove that his physical powers, especially those of resistance, were not below mediocrity. Of course, his temperate habits assisted to conserve his strength and to prolong his life, even when he came into the grasp of disease during his later years.

[1] Cap. M. Ant. 19, 18. [2] P. 145. [3] lxxi, 36.

Victor speaks of him as being *aevi validior* (stronger than his age) at the approach of death![1] The truth seems to be that both in mind and body he had a large amount of passive resistance.

After all that has been said of Marcus in this book it seems almost unnecessary to describe his character. He himself lays great stress upon the virtue of sincerity,[2] and Dio attributes it to him in most emphatic terms.[3] As he appeared so he was. His virtues were not of the class which expands best under agreeable circumstances, like the qualities of a kindly man who has always been in touch with reasonable people. Upon the contrary, they were such as are most effectively developed by inimical circumstances, as where the kindly man becomes brave and patient in having to deal with people whose conduct offends all his benevolent instincts. Marcus was temperate, chaste, and loyal. Those nearest and dearest to him were the opposite. He was industrious and economical; his colleague was idle and extravagant. He loved peace, but he was constantly occupied with war. Yet this opposition sweetened his character instead of making it bitter. He became a miracle of indulgence. The goodness and purity of his disposition preserved him from inward temptations; but fortune provided him with a rich supply of outward trials. I omit those peculiar to the advantages of his station in life, which, if we may judge by the conduct of others thus situated, were neither few nor small; for, apart from these, the responsibilities of his position afforded him perpetual opportunities to fail in the most various ways. Yet we find him over and over again vanquishing difficulties with unceasing resourcefulness and courage. What gives his efforts a priceless value is the fact that he

[1] CAES. 16. [2] MEDIT. [3] lxxi, 34.

could not but foresee their inevitable failure. He regarded it as his duty to maintain the existing limits of the Empire ; but he must have been perfectly aware that all his attempts in this matter availed only to stay for a moment an irresistible flood. The thought of having laboured in vain, and of being destined to fail utterly and forever, is a hideous nightmare even for those who seek no reward here or hereafter, and who would be quite content with being useful though their efforts should remain unknown or even be condemned. But this is the very thing that gives moral endeavour its supreme worth. It is much to overcome the desire for the laurels and the palm ; but it is infinitely more to vanquish the longing for success. For then virtue becomes natural, and is manifested just as impersonally as the sap within the trees.

Chapter XVIII

THE PHILOSOPHY OF MARCUS

The philosophy of Marcus Antoninus is contained in a small work commonly named *Meditations*. The original title (if there were any) is lost. Only one complete MS., the Vatican, is in existence. Other Vatican MSS. and three Florentine MSS. give selections. The first edition appeared, together with a Latin translation, at Zürich, in 1558 (8vo). It was prepared by Xylander from a MS. now untraceable; and was descriptively entitled *The XII Books of the Emperor Marcus Antoninus* written *for himself*, which closely agrees with the designation applied in the MSS. of the selections before mentioned. Each book is distinguished by a letter of the Greek alphabet; and divided into sections also marked in that way. The theme is the moral aspect of conduct. The matter is fragmentary and disconnected. The work has the appearance of having been composed for the author's private use, and not for publication. The parts were probably written at very different times. The first Book contains a reference to the wife of Marcus as being still alive, and ends with the words, "Among the Quadi at Granua." The second Book has the termination, "This at Carnuntum." Elsewhere the author, addressing himself, observes: "Thou art an old man."[1] "Every man's life is sufficient. But thine is nearly finished."[2] "Short is the little that remains to thee of life."[3] Marcus died in his fifty-ninth

[1] ii, 2. [2] ii, 6. [3] x, 15.

year. This age is not patriarchal; but as he had passed through much trouble, weariness, and pain he might well feel old before attaining it, and even expect to die shortly. The circumstances mentioned would readily explain certain inconsistencies of thought and ambiguities of expression into which he falls at times. The great charm of the work is the writer's profound and affectionate intimacy with his subject. In this respect it resembles THE NATURAL HISTORY OF SELBORNE. For Marcus Antoninus gave to right actions and right motives the same close observation that Gilbert White gave to creeping things and flying fowl. In both cases the study had occupied a lifetime, and the results are imparted with the negligence of overflowing knowledge. Here, however, the resemblance ends; for, while the style of the naturalist is always easy and graceful, that of the moralist is in general rough and clumsy; but its habitual rudeness is mitigated by occasional touches of great beauty. The intellectual characteristics of Marcus, together with his principles, or, as some might call them, his prejudices, have to a great extent determined his way of writing. Referring to himself, he says: "Men cannot admire the sharpness of thy wits"; and he finds consolation in the power to exercise virtue, adding: "If in truth thou canst be charged with being rather slow and dull of comprehension, thou must exert thyself about this also, not neglecting it, nor taking pleasure in thy dullness."[1] Of his master, Rusticus, he says: "From him I learned not to be led astray to sophistic emulation, nor to write on speculative matters .....and to abstain from rhetoric and poetry and fine writing."[2] Of the gods he says: "To them I am indebted.....that I did not make more proficiency in

[1] v, 5. [2] i, 7.

rhetoric, poetry, and other studies, in which I should perhaps have been completely engaged."[1] But his splendid education had given him the inclinations and the habits of a lettered man. He quotes freely the Grecian sages, and even the Grecian poets and dramatists. He finds it necessary to cry: "Throw away thy books; no longer distract thyself.....cast away the thirst for books that thou mayest not die murmuring";[2] and he reminds himself that he will "not get to read either his own memoranda or the selections compiled by him for his old age."[3] These facts explain sundry peculiarities of the work, such as the inconsecutiveness, the preference of concrete to abstract thought, the lack of critical inquiry, the fullness of practical wisdom, and the occasional presence of eloquence in an unpretentious style.

After the above observations the reader will not expect to find that Marcus gave his thought a systematic arrangement; but it would be incorrect to infer from this that he had no system. For certain principles that recur in a desultory fashion throughout the work have a natural connection which can readily be traced. Moreover, as the practical instructions relate to these principles, they have a value which independent aphorisms could not possess.

For the sake of convenience it seemed best to select the chief problems of philosophy, and to reproduce in each case the answer of Marcus.

I. The Universe.—The radical idea of Marcus, and one singularly prolific in consequences, is that all existing things, animate and inanimate, rational and irrational, are the co-ordinate and co-operative members of an organic universe. One intelligent principle manifests

[1] i, 17. [2] ii, 2. [3] iii, 14.

itself throughout this scale of being ; and, agreeably to the respective elements, furnishes adjustments and motion, supplies animation, and imparts reason.

> Constantly regard the universe as one living being, having one substance and one soul (iv, 40). There is one common substance, though it is distributed among countless bodies which have different qualities. There is one soul, though it is distributed among infinite natures and individuals (xii, 30). Observe.....how all things act with one movement, and how all things are the co-operating causes of all things that exist ; observe, too, the continuous spinning of the thread and the contexture of the web (iv, 40). For things have been co-ordinated to form the same universe (vii, 9). The things without sensation.....the intelligent principle holds together (xii, 30). All things are implicated with one another, and the bond is holy (vii, 9).

II. God and the Gods.—It is clear from the preceding section that Marcus reduced existence to two principles —namely, substance and intelligence—and that he did not believe either of them to have produced the other in any way. Thus he was neither a Pantheist nor a true Materialist, nor even a true Theist. Nevertheless, his intelligent principle has the chief qualities of a deity ; and it might appear that such a being would suffice for every religious necessity, but Marcus evidently thought otherwise, for he encumbered his system with a mob of inferior deities, which for all practical purposes are like the fifth wheel to a coach. He speaks of "the sun..... and the rest of the gods,"[1] and on one occasion he gives a very curious account of their relationship to the Most High :—

> Wilt thou convince thyself that.....it will be

[1] viii, 19.

> well whatever shall please them, and whatever they shall give for the conservation of the perfect living being, the good and just and beautiful, which governs and holds together all things (x, 1).

He refers to the providence of his deities, and once he says :—

> If they have not determined about one individually, they have certainly determined about the whole at least, and the things which happen by way of sequence in the general arrangement I ought to accept with pleasure and be content with them (vii, 44).

The gods of Marcus are well-natured beings, never angry, jealous, or vindictive, like some that could be named ; but, on the contrary, always wise and benevolent, just as the good man himself desired to be. They inspire confidence, not fear :—

> To go away from among men, if there are gods, is not a thing to be afraid of, for the gods will not involve thee in evil.....In truth they do exist and they do care for human things, and they have put all the means in man's power to enable him not to fall into any real evils (ii, 11).

He asks in all simplicity :—

> As to doing me harm, why should they have any desire towards that? For what advantage would result to them from this, or to the whole, which is the special object of their providence? (vi, 44).

Truly he would have been much surprised to hear that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God"[1] The gods should be worshipped, but as Antoninus Pius worshipped them, "without superstition."[2] "On all occasions" they are to be invoked. Length of time is no question, "for even three hours so

[1] Heb. x, 31. [2] i, 16 ; vi, 30.

spent are sufficient"[1] Prayers, however, must not be for the aversion of things feared, or for the adduction of things desired, but for strength to overcome the fear or the desire.[2] Thus sweet honey is obtained from very homely flowers. Alas, there are things that cannot be touched without defilement; and hence it was that the just and kindly Marcus once so far forget himself as to class deniers of the gods with traitors and chamberers.[3] The only excuse is to say that he was a tied thinker. The gods and their worship formed the national religion. The emperor held the office of Pontifex Maximus. Thus it was part of his official task to support the faith, and to perform, at any rate on State occasions, its supreme rites. Being extremely conscientious, Marcus would regard it as disloyal to question these traditions; and the exclusion of inquiry, aided by the effect of practice, would foster the will to believe. But he was not free from haunting doubts, for he often envisages the possibility that the universe is due to the activity of atoms, in order to show that, even on this melancholy hypothesis, virtue is the best course. Once he exclaims: "If there is a god, all is well; if chance rules, do not thou also be governed by it."[4]

It is noteworthy that, although brought up among the Salian priests, and initiated at a mature age into the Eleusinian Mysteries, he never talks of expiation, of propitiation, of purification, or of any other mystical way of approaching the deity, and that he never mentions the gods in terms of affection after the manner of exalted pietists. With him, to profess religion was a part of his public duty, like keeping up the army and leading it in time of war. He was so punctilious that, according to Dio, he used to offer sacrifices at home on

[1] vi, 23. [2] ix, 40. [3] iii, 16. [4] ix, 28.

days when they were not appointed to be offered in public.[1]

III. The Soul of Man.—According to Marcus, the human soul is an individual form of the divine soul :—

> There is one intelligent soul, though it seems to be divided (xii, 30). Every man's intelligence is a god, and an efflux of the deity. His very soul came from the deity (xii, 26). Among reasonable animals, one intelligent soul is distributed (ix, 8).

He thought that the soul is imparted between conception and birth (xii, 24). In an interesting passage he says that, "on the hypothesis of souls continuiug to exist," they would no more exceed the local capacity of the air than bodies exceed that of the earth ; because, just as bodies "after a certain continuance" finally "make room for other dead bodies" by dissolution and mutation, "even so souls which are removed into the air after subsisting for some time are transmuted and diffused, and assume a fiery nature by being received into the seminal intelligence of the universe, and in this way make room for fresh souls which come to dwell there."[2] This would seem to imply that individualized parts of the universal soul sustain in the process of individualization a loss of refinement, and that the original purity is recovered only upon the cessation of individuality, the acquired coarseness being transmuted by the action of "the ethereal fire," which, according to the Stoics, is the very essence of the deity, or of "the seminal intelligence," as Marcus terms it. But the fact that he professes to be arguing hypothetically discredits the supposition that he is expounding his own proper views. In any case, a limit is attributed to the soul's survival after death ; and, if the analogy between the

[1] L. 71, c. 34. [2] iv, 21.

body and the soul is intended to be complete, that limit is fixed at no great distance. But we cannot think that Marcus admitted even this limited survival, for elsewhere he teaches clearly and repeatedly that individuality perishes for ever at death, because the human body and soul are temporary modifications of the universal body and soul.

> Remember that no man loses any other life than this which he now lives ; nor lives any other life than this which he now loses (ii, 14). Near is thy forgetfulness of all things, and the forgetfulness of thee by all (vii, 21). Soon, very soon, thou wilt be ashes, or a skeleton, and either a name, or not even a name (v, 38). About death : whether it is a dispersion or a resolution into atoms, it is either extinction or change (vii, 32). Before long thou wilt be nobody and nowhere [also viii, 5], nor will any of the things exist which thou now seest, nor any of those which are now living. For all things are formed by nature to change and be turned, and to perish in order that other things in continuous succession may exist (xii, 21).

Twice only does he seem to hesitate on the question. After saying that it is wrong to blame the gods for not having provided good men with a future life, he adds : "Because [as] it is not so, if in fact it is not so, be thou convinced it ought not to have been so."[1] And again :—

> Thou art come to the shore ; get out. If indeed to another life, there is no want of gods, no, not even there (iii, 3).

These transient doubts of an unbeliever are analogous to those by which believers are so frequently assailed. But while in the former case the cause is a recrudescence of traditional views, in the latter case it is the striving

[1] xii, 5.

of the rational principle. For the rest, that oft-repeated willingness to pass away and to lose self for ever is one of the characteristic differences between the teaching of Marcus and of Christianity, where the chief pretension is that of having "brought life and immortality to light," and thus "delivered them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage."[1]

IV. Freewill and Necessity.—Like the Stoics in general, Marcus held that conduct, whether active or passive, is determined by opinion, and that opinion is formed from appearances. Discrimination is the work of a power called "the ruling faculty."

> Things stand outside of us, themselves by themselves, neither knowing aught of themselves, nor expressing any judgment. What is it, then, which does judge about them? The ruling faculty (ix, 15). Zeus has given to every man for his guardian and guide a portion of himself. And this is every man's understanding and reason (v, 27). [Here and in iii, 3–17, this directive principle is termed "the daemon."]

Marcus insists strongly and frequently that "the ruling faculty" enjoys perfect freedom.

> I can have that opinion about anything which I ought to have (vii, 2). Intelligence and reason are able to go through everything that opposes them (xii, 11). Remember that the ruling faculty is invincible (viii, 48).

Hence, as conduct is determined by opinion, and as the formation of opinion is unrestrained, conduct itself is quite free. Marcus often proclaims this liberty.

> There is no one who hinders thee from always doing and saying the things which are according to the nature of which thou art a part (ii, 9). No

[1] 2 Tim. i, 10.

> one is able to hinder thee so that each act shall not do its duty (viii, 32). It is in my power never to act contrary to my god and daemon (v. 10). What a power man has to do nothing except what god will approve (xii, 11). Show those qualities then which are continually in thy power—sincerity, gravity, endurance of labours, aversion to pleasure, etc. (v, 5).

Nevertheless, on other occasions, when urging the duty of forbearance, Marcus no less earnestly contends that wrongdoing should be pardoned because it arises from ignorance and is therefore involuntary.

> If men.....do not right, it is plain that they do so involuntarily and in ignorance. For, as every soul is unwittingly deprived of the truth, so also is it unwittingly deprived of the power of behaving to each man according to his deserts (xi, 18). We ought to blame neither gods, for they do nothing wrong either voluntarily or involuntarily, nor men, for they do nothing wrong except involuntarily. Consequently we should blame nobody (xii, 12).

Of course, if man acts involuntarily, he is not responsible for his conduct, and cannot be regarded as a fit subject for either reward or punishment. But this does not mean that evil-doers should have their fling. For, if the idea of punition vanishes, the necessity of repression abides, since crime, like pestilence, being an evil to society, is a thing that must be combated. The theory of irresponsibility has two advantages : it favours a more humane view of the criminal, and it saves him from an oppressive feeling of degradation. Moreover, as a question of jurisprudence, the effect of repressive measures remains unimpaired. For, provided it is known that, whether agents are free or otherwise, certain inflictions will follow certain conduct, then, because motives determine action, the desire to avoid

those inflictions will cause men to avoid that conduct. For the rest, it may be said that, in excusing others for vice as involuntary, while stimulating himself to virtue as within his power, Marcus resembles the child who is so preoccupied in chasing a butterfly that he does not see a perilous gap at his feet. Intent on promoting goodness, he adduced in support thereof every plausible consideration without tarrying to examine whether these multifarious arguments co-operated or whether they clashed. In the present case he remembered that, if men can do right and will not do it, they deserve no forbearance, and that unless men believe in their power to act they never will act; but he forgot that if the ox is slaughtered it cannot be kept at the plough. The truth is that, by his reiterated application of motives, he exhibits a firm belief in their effectiveness, and thus gives a practical acknowledgment that in moral, no less than in physical, matters action is determined by impulsion. Indeed, the illusion of choice is occasioned by nothing else than perceiving different impulses without perceiving the strength of the decisive one.

V. The Moral Economy.—This is the supreme manifestation of the universal order. It is composed of beings who participate in reason, and to whom reason prescribes conduct. Hence, all men are members of one state and subjects of one law. On this point Marcus is admirably clear. He says:—

> There is one universe made up of all things, and one god who pervades all things, and one substance and one law, [one] common reason in all intelligent animals, and one truth (vii, 9). If our intellectual part is common, the reason also, in respect of which we are rational beings, is common; if this is so, common also is the reason which commands us what to do, and what not to do.; if this is so, there is a common law also; if this is so, we are

> fellow citizens; if this is so, we are members of some political community; if this is so, the world is in a manner a state (iv, 4).

As the universe is composed of one substance and one soul, and as all things work together in perfect order, it is a law for everything to act according to its nature. This action is involuntary in all cases except that of man. For, while the other beings act naturally but without perceiving their nature, man acts naturally by perceiving his nature. Hence, in the case of man to act according to nature is to act according to reason, for reason is that which distinguishes him from the other members of the universe.

> Dost thou not see the little plants, the little birds, the ants, the spiders, the bees, working together to put in order their several parts of the universe? Art thou unwilling to do the work of a human being, and dost thou not make haste to do that which is according to thy nature? (v, 1). To the rational animal the same act is according to nature and according to reason (vii, 11).

Morality is the conduct prescribed by reason. It consists first of social duty, or obligations with respect to our fellow men, then of private duty, or obligations with respect to the things which in themselves are neither good nor evil, such as pleasure, pain, and death. Under the former category are justice and benevolence; under the latter, patience and temperance.

> Just as it is with the members of those bodies which are united in one, so it is with rational beings, which exist separate; for they have been constituted for one co-operation (vii, 13). For we are made for co-operation, like feet, like hands, like eyelids, like the rows of upper and lower teeth (ii, 1). As thou thyself art a component part of a social system, so let every act of thine be a com-

> ponent part of social life (ix, 23). But death, certainly, and life, honour and dishonour, pain and pleasure, all these things equally happen to good men and bad, being things that make us neither better nor worse. Therefore they are neither good nor evil (ii, 11, see also v, 26).

If, in contradiction to reason, man obeys one or another of the impulses possessed in common with inferior beings, he acts against reason, and this conduct is the only evil possible; for things beyond human control cannot do any harm, and, being natural, they are strictly in accord with the universe. Indeed, the existence of moral evil involves no dissonance in the cosmic harmony.

> When thou art troubled about anything, thou hast forgotten that all things happen according to the universal nature (xii, 26). Generally, wickedness does no harm at all to the universe; and particularly the wickedness [of one man] does no harm to another. It is only harmful to him who has it in his power to be released from it, as soon as he shall choose (viii, 55). We are all working to one end.....but men co-operate after different fashions; and even those co-operate abundantly who find fault with what happens, and those who try to oppose it and to hinder it, for the universe had need even of such men (vi, 42).

Here a modern critic is likely to raise the following objection:—If Marcus is correct in asserting that the right use and the wrong use of the reason are the only things respectively good and bad for man, then he is justified in concluding that evil is exclusively moral. But does not this conclusion tend to support oppression by denying that the effects thereof are harmful, except in the mistaken opinion of the subjects, who, however, ought to form the contrary judgment? The objection,

though plausible, can be removed. Poverty and slavery, witness Epictetus, do not necessarily keep a man from attaining his proper end. But, as poverty and slavery could not exist if men fulfilled the duties imposed by a correct view of social relationships, the prevalence of the doctrine that virtue is the only good would automatically remove inequality of possessions and every form of tyranny. For whether pain be, or be not, an evil, the infliction thereof by men upon their fellows is certainly an evil, being the result of a vicious disposition. Moreover, as private contentions and public strife are mostly due to the excessive value that individuals and nations put upon the possession of commodities and land, the belief that these things are indifferent would prevent all the horrors arising from such competition. To destroy a tree, there is no need to lop off its branches ; the better way is to fell it.

The ethical system of Marcus, whether true or false, is at least the purest that was ever invented. It rests obligation upon the constitution of man, and it never attempts to ensure right conduct by proposing either rewards or punishments.

> For what more dost thou want when thou hast done a man a service? Art thou not content that thou hast done something conformable to thy nature? and dost thou seek to be paid for it? just as if the eye demanded a recompense for seeing, or the feet for walking. For as these members are formed for a particular purpose, and by working according to their several constitutions obtain what is their own, so also as man is formed by nature to acts of benevolence, when he has done anything benevolent or in any other way conducive to the common interest, he has acted conformably to his constitution, and he gets what is his own (ix, 42). When thou hast done a good act and another has received

> it, why dost thou still look for a third thing besides these, as fools do, either to have the reputation of having done a good act or to obtain a return? (vii, 73).

Here again Marcus and Jesus are much at variance, since the latter thought it necessary to encourage renunciation by the offer of a hundredfold return in "houses .....and lands"[1] and even went so far as to promise a reward for bestowing a cup of cold water.[2] The difference is still greater in the matter of sanction, which Marcus never once took into consideration, whereas Jesus threatens it in the terrible form of the quenchless fire and the undying worm.[3] In common with all the Stoics, Marcus regarded fear as a base passion, and he reckons it a thing to be deprecated before the gods.[4] Hence, in his opinion, to have cured a man of lust by inspiring him with fear would have been like curing him of a headache by giving him the colic; for lasciviousness would simply have been exchanged for cowardice. As Marcus believed identity to perish at death, it is clear that he did not think the moral economy would concern its present subjects in a future life; and, moreover, upon his principles any such continuation of the system with a view to its completion is quite unnecessary, and even impossible. For, as pain is not an evil, as vice is involuntary, as virtue is its own reward, and as even wrong-doing subserves the general order of the universe, there is no occasion whatever for indemnification, retribution, remuneration, or even amelioration. Here is another striking difference between Marcus and Christianity, for according to the latter it is to be expected that at the end of time a terrific personage upon a great white throne shall judge the past deeds of

[1] Mk. x, 30. [2] Mt. x, 42; Mk. ix, 41.
[3] Mk. ix, 48. [4] ix, 40.

all men, recompensing the good, and punishing the wicked ; and upon the judgment shall make all things new.....The above are the main outlines of the system. There are, however, one or two details of application that should be noticed. As Marcus enacted laws for the mitigation of slavery, it is natural to find him asking himself : " How hast thou behaved.....to thy slaves ? "[1] But, in view of the silence which teachers more revered than he is have observed with respect to the rights of our dumb relations, it is an agreeable surprise to hear him say :—

> As to the animals which have no reason, and generally all things and objects, do thou, since thou hast reason, and they have not, make use of them with a generous and liberal spirit (vi, 23).

The evils against which he girds especially are anger, resentment, and discontent ; also the lust of life, the fear of death, and the desire of fame. In some cases he opposes to a vice its opposite virtue—as, for instance, to anger, mildness ; to resentment, forgiveness ; and to discontent, patience. It is noteworthy that the faults exposed are mostly those peculiarly characteristic of old age. Comparatively little is said of temperance and moderation. These are virtues that Marcus had acquired early and practised successfully. Besides, it is easier to restrain the appetites than it is to govern the emotions ; and Marcus was long exposed to things that must have tried severely his forbearance and endurance. The only fleshy weakness that occasioned him compunction was a certain disinclination to rise betimes. He alludes thrice to this pathetic circumstance.[2] He warns himself not to expect too much from his efforts for the improvement of other people,

[1] v, 31. [2] v, 1 ; vii, 21 ; viii, 12.

saying: "Be content if the smallest thing goes on well, and consider such an event to be no small matter."[1] This is all the more remarkable since Capitolinus attributes to him the art of making bad men good, and good men better.[2] Of his attempts at self-amendment he says:—

> Be not disgusted, nor discouraged, nor dissatisfied, if thou dost not succeed in doing everything according to right principles; but when thou hast failed return back again, and be content if the greater part of what thou doest is consistent with man's nature (v, 9).

He is well aware that others have observed his shortcomings; but this only emboldens him to say: "Be content if thou shalt live the rest of thy life as thy nature wills."[3] Indeed, he seems pleased to have escaped the danger of living for reputation. This indifference to "the great cloud of witnesses" is one of his most touching disclosures, and it proves conclusively that he was far advanced on the way to perfection. Such is the system, and such the work. It cannot be denied that some of the principles are open to question; that some of the arguments lack force; that some of the dictates are impracticable. In these respects the book is more or less a failure as a treatise on ethics, which should, of course, proceed upwards from sound premises to safe conclusions. But, upon the other hand, it has such a strong tendency to promote goodness that it serves the one end of ethics more successfully than many a better exposition of the theme. For, with the exception of Emerson, no teacher ever rivalled Antoninus in the power of raising men from low aims to high purposes. His fine perception of duty, his

[1] ix, 29. [2] M. Ant. 12. [3] viii, 1.

spotless purity of motive, and his untiring effort of obedience are the sources of this power. He breathed his personality into his book, and thus it became itself a font of inspiration.

APPENDIX

In compiling this book I have availed myself of the following works :—

Ancient Sources

I.—M. Cornelii Frontonis et M. Aurelii Imperatoris Epistulae.....Recensuit Samuel Adrianus Nabur, Lipsiae.....1867. This is the earliest source. I have not seen any translation, or even synopsis ; but from a bookseller's catalogue I learn that there is a French version.[1]

II.—D. Imperatoris Marci Antonini Commentariorum Quos sibi Ipsi Scripsit. Libri. XII. Curavit Jo. Matth. Schultz, Lipsiae, 1901.

The Thoughts of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. Translated by George Long, M.A., London, 1919. This version is renowned for its fidelity, and the present edition is a model of elegance. It should be in the hands of every one.

III. The tenth volume of the History of Dio Cassius in the monumental edition of Messieurs E. Gross and V. Boissée, Paris, 1870. This contains books 71 to 80, the first two being occupied with the lives of Marcus and his son Commodus respectively. The Greek text is that of Xiphilin, enriched with extracts from other sources. Dio flourished as a youthful senator in the reign of Commodus (180–192) ; and was, therefore, in a position to ascertain the facts. Alas, this part of his

[1] Marc Aurèle et Fronton. Lettres inédites, retrouvées sur les palimpsestes de Milan et de Rome, trad. avec le texte latin en regard et de notes par M. Armand Lessan. *Paris, Levavasseur,* 1830, 2 vols. in -8, rel. demi-veau. M. Des Vergers quotes three or four letters from Lettres de Marc Aurèle et de Fronton, ed. Cassan.

work exists only in Xiphilin's abridgment and a few stray fragments.

IV.—The collection entitled HISTORIA AUGUSTA. The edition is that of C. L. F. Panckoucke, 3 vols., Paris, 1844. It is provided with French versions and annotations by different pens. The parts chiefly of interest for the present purpose are :—

1. The lives of Antoninus Pius, of Marcus Antoninus, and of Lucius Verus by Julius Capitolinus, ANTONINI PII VITA, M. ANTONINI PHILOSOPHI VITA, and VERI IMPERATORIS VITA.

2. The lives of Hadrian and of Aelius Verus, by Aelius Spartianus. HADRIANI IMPERATORIS VITA, and AELII VERI VITA.

3. The life of Avidius Cassius by Vulcatius Gallicanus. AVIDI CASSII VITA.

4. The life of Commodus by Aelius Lampridius. COMMODI ANTONINI VITA.

The above works of these four authors are all addressed to the Emperor Diocletian (284–305), the address being put in the superscription except in two cases (M. ANT. and AVID. CAS.), where, however, it is known from the text (cc. 19, 3). Hardly anything is recorded of the scribes in question, and there is a grave suspicion that they may have been one and the same person. They rely, of course, on earlier sources, especially Marius Maximus and Asinius Quadratus, whose lucubrations are lost. In the case of Marcus they have borrowed very little if anything from Dio. They present their facts in great confusion. Capitolinus buries Marcus in his eighteenth chapter, and then makes him carry on various wars and other affairs till the twenty-eighth chapter, when he puts him on his deathbed for the last time. Both in arrangement and in style they are colloquial. Their grammar is deplorable. Probably, however, it was the kind used in common speech at that day. But it is easy to forgive them their shortcomings, as they have rendered us a great service by preserving a mass of valuable facts which would otherwise have been lost. It should also be added that

Capitolinus displays a moral insight worthy of great respect, and that the more you read him the more you like him.

V.—Eusebius Pamphilus, Bishop of Caesarea in Palestine, who died about A.D. 340. I consulted two of his works. The first yielded information small in quantity, but not in value; while the second afforded a large amount of precious material. Here are the titles:—

1. CHRONICORUM CANONUM LIBRI DUO. This ends at the year A.D. 325. It was written in Greek, but the original text has perished with the exception of fragments quoted by ancient writers. Jerome extended it to A.D. 378, and turned it into Latin, making certain alterations which cannot always be traced. The edition here used is a Latin version made from an Armenian version by the Italian scholar Angelus Maius (Cardinal Angelo Mai) in collaboration with an Armenian scholar Johannes Zohrabus, and published by them at Milan in A.D. 1818. The surviving fragments of the Greek text are added as notes to the respective pages of the translation.

2. HISTORIA ECCLESIASTICA. This is in ten books, the last of which mentions the triumph of Constantine the Great over all his rivals—an event which left him in A.D. 323 the sole occupant of the throne. The text used is the original Greek, edited by W. Dindorf (Leipzig, 1890). The translation of the parts relating to Polycarp and to the Martyrs of Lyons is that given in a work entitled THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST PREVIOUS TO THE REFORMATION. This contains neither date nor author's name, but it was printed for the Religious Tract Society (evidently about a century ago), and they sold it at their Depository. The version is from an older, and also unnamed, source. Its merits, however, are obvious to every one who compares it with the original, and therefore I have reproduced it with few, if any, changes.

VI.—Sextus Aurelius Victor. DE CAESARIBUS. In his penultimate chapter the author of this work mentions a certain time when one whom he calls "our Emperor

Constantius" was made a Caesar; while in his final chapter he says that "Julius Constantius, ruling the empire throughout [the last] three-and-twenty years .....is [*or* has been] scarcely ever out of arms." The order of the work proves that both these notices refer to Constantius II, grandson of Constantius I, and son of Constantine the Great. According to Liebenham's *Kaiserliste*, Constantius II reigned from September 9, 337, to November 3, 361; and thus September 8, 360, would close the twenty-third year of his reign. Hence 360 is the year when the De Caesaribus was finished. For the rest many suppose that the author is identical with the person whom Ammianus Marcellinus calls "Victor.....a writer of histories," and about whom he relates that the man was [in the autumn of 361] made governor of Lower Pannonia by the Emperor Julianus, and afterwards became Prefect of Rome (xxi, 10).

VII.—Sextus Rufus. Liber De Provinciis et Victoriis Populi Romani. The work ends at the ignominious peace which the Emperor Jovianus made with the Persians shortly before February 16, A.D. 364, the date of his death. The dedication is to the Emperor Valens (364–378); and at the end of the book the author says that, although advanced in age, he will prepare to celebrate the exploits of his patron, praying that the latter may add to the glory of his triumph over the Goths the honour of dictating terms [to the Persians] at Babylon.

VIII.—Flavius Eutropius. Breviarium Historiae Romanae. This goes no further than the aforesaid death of Jovianus. The dedication is also to Valens, and it was made subsequently to his Gothic victories, for the author gives him the title Gothicus, which fate afterwards turned so tragically into ridicule. Eutropius says that he was serving under Julianus against the Persians [in 364] when that Emperor was slain (x, 8).

IX.—Sextus Aurelius Victor. Epitome. This work ends with the death of the Emperor Theodosius I, which took place on January 17, A.D. 395. Thus at the lowest

estimate it appeared thirty-five years later than the De Caesaribus of the Sextus Aurelius Victor previously mentioned. There is a difference in style between the two works, and the later contradicts the earlier on certain points. The superscription also presents difficulties, for it reads thus: *Epitome Concerning the Life and Manners of the Roman Emperors, Excerpted from the Books of Sextus Aurelius Victor from Augustus Caesar to Theodosius the Emperor.* Finally, the MSS. vary between Victor, Victorius, and Victorinus. Hence it is supposed (rightly or wrongly) that the De Caesaribus and the Epitome are not by one and the same author.

X.—Paulus Orosius. Historiarum Adversus Paganos Libri VIII. This work was written at the request of Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, to refute the notion that the sack of Rome, A.D. 410, and other misfortunes, were due to the abandonment of Paganism for Christianity. Bayle says that Orosius is believed to have entitled it De Miseria Hominum (Concerning the Misery of Men); and he might have added that the author contributed to their misery by inditing his miserable book. The introduction addresses Augustine, whose death occurred in A.D. 430.

XI.—Flavius Philostratus. Vitae Sophistarum. This work I had a difficulty in getting, and could only find it in the German version of Professor Adolph Heinrich Christian, published at Stuttgart in 1855. The book is dedicated to a certain Antonius Gordianus, known to have been one of three Emperors thus named, of whom the two first died in 238 and the last in 242. Excepting Dio, this author is our oldest source of an independent nature, but as he contributes only incidental information I have placed him after the regular historians, although a few of his anecdotes are more valuable than the material which some of them offer. I may add that he is a very pleasant writer, with a real genius for describing both persons and things.

With the exception of the *Letters* and the *Thoughts*, I have reaped all the above works as a niggardly farmer

reaps his field, leaving not a straw behind for the gleaners. This is mentioned because, when readers have got pleasure from facts accredited to books beyond their reach, they are sometimes haunted by the disagreeable suspicion that these treasuries have not been entirely despoiled. As regards the *Letters*, I have noticed every one, and culled whatever seemed in any way characteristic of Marcus and his relationships. From the *Thoughts* I have abstracted all that had reference to the biography of Marcus, or that was necessary to the presentation of his system. In the work they are referred to as the MEDITATIONS, which appears to be the better title, and which is the one commonly given to them both here and abroad.

Modern Authorities

Of these I would mention particularly: ESSAI SUR MARC-AURÈLE D'APRÈS LES MONUMENTS ÉPIGRAPHIQUES, par M. Noel Des Vergers (Paris, 1860); and MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS ALS ZEITGENOSSE UND FREUND DES RABBI JEHUDA HA-NASI, von Dr. Arnold Bodek[1] (Leipzig, 1868). As neither work could be sufficiently praised without the appearance of slighting the other, it is better to say nothing about them except that they are both masterpieces of their respective types. Another valuable work is FASTI CONSULARES IMPERI ROMANI VON 30 V. CHR. BIS 565 N. CHR. MIT KAISERLISTE AND ANHANG BEARBEITET, von Willy Liebenham (Bonn, 1910). This is the Consular List and the Imperial List from B.C. 30 to A.D. 565. Among the books cited more or less briefly are Bayle's HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL DICTIONARY (London, 1710), Gibbon's DECLINE AND FALL (Bonn's edition, 1853), and an undated translation of Renan's ORIGINS OF CHRISTIANITY.

[1] On this author's title-page the D before his two names differs in type from their capitals, whence I take it to mean Dr., and thus I have referred to him in the text.

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NOTE

On p. 161, line 18, *for* "Where is that Cato the Censor?" *read* "Where is that Marcus, Cato the Censor?"

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